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SPAIN TO-DAY

SPAIN TO-DAY

BY FRANK B. DEAKIN
FORMERLY PRESS ATTACHÉ AT THE
BRITISH EMBASSY AT MADRID

NEW YORK
ALFRED · A · KNOPF
1924

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY THE WHITEFRIARS PRESS, LTD.,
LONDON AND TONBRIDGE.

PREFACE

Of recent years many books on Spain and Spanish life have appeared in England. The art, literature, history and beauties of the Iberian Peninsula have been fully described in many admirable works in our language. But as far as I am aware not one of these books deals with the phases of Spanish life which I have taken upon myself to write about in these pages. Possibly, the wish to avoid offence to the susceptibilities of Spanish friends has prompted many a writer who knows well the actual condition of Spain to eschew completely a task which might preclude a continuance of friendship. One result of this omission has been to create in the minds of Englishmen either a very incomplete or, to say the least, a strangely erroneous idea of the country. In the chapters which follow I have attempted to describe, amongst other things, those phases of governmental activity (or lack of activity) which have combined to cause Spain to be almost as dreadful a country for its inhabitants in this twentieth century as any European country was in the Middle Ages. For this the Spanish people are to blame only in that they have submitted with a patience almost unbelievable to one form of despotism after another—content in their oriental stoicism to await the happy day when a man may appear who will sever the bonds of tyranny and lead them to a

freedom and well-being which for their many good qualities they deserve.

In no European country to-day is there such a distinction between rulers and ruled as in Spain. In no other country is there such an abuse of power by rulers and their satellites. Lest I be accused of prejudice in attempting to describe a few of the most flagrant examples of Spanish misrule, I have frequently quoted the opinions and criticisms of Spaniards themselves of the methods employed by those whom circumstances have placed in charge of their administration.

Most of the book was written before the military movement of last September overthrew the constitutional authorities and invested General Primo de Rivera with a virtual dictatorship; but the evils summarily described are too firmly rooted to be removed in a day. The Military Directorate has yet to prove its capacity for re-building where it has destroyed, and partly successful soldiers are not necessarily successful administrators.

Readers may remark that I have made few references to the hand-in-glove work of the State and the Roman Catholic Church in contemporary Spain, the intensity and influence of which has certainly not diminished by the recent visit of Alfonso XIII to the Vatican. I have preferred to avoid this subject as far as possible, since, after all, much of it is of a controversial nature, and my main object is to present facts.

Finally, I would say to my many Spanish friends everywhere that if I criticise and revile the methods

of Spanish Governments, I do so in a spirit of friendship for the *people* as opposed to the ruling caste. I have lived so long amongst Spanish peoples, and have such a regard for them, that I feel it is my right and, indeed, my duty to speak frankly when the occasion warrants it.

F. B. D.

LONDON,
December, 1923.

P.S.—I have to thank the proprietors of *The Syren and Shipping* for their permission to reproduce in Chapter I a part of the English version of an article which I wrote in Spanish for a special issue of their paper in December, 1922.

ERRATA

Page 138, 2*nd line*: *For* "*El Liberal*" *read* "*La Libertad.*"

Page 147, 28*th line*: *For* "annual rent" *read* "saleable value."

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ESE TE QUERE BIEN
QUE TE HACE LLORAR

Spanish Proverb

SPAIN TO-DAY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

Milicia es la vida del hombre
Contra la malicia del hombre.
GRACIAN.

(Man's life is one long struggle against the malice of his fellow man.)

NATURE has allotted to Spain and Great Britain boundaries so easy to define and so difficult to cross that the area of each country has remained almost invariable through the centuries. Putting on one side their political organisation, which has undergone the usual transformations since men began to congregate in tribes for mutual protection against prehistoric beasts, until the present day, when each country is ruled by a single Government, it may be said that from the geographical point of view Spain and Great Britain are the same to-day as they were three thousand years ago. Both countries enjoy great natural advantages. They are, so to speak, astride the two great routes which Americo-European trade must follow in order to have the necessary freedom and rapidity of movement. Their lengthy coasts are a national way of communication of the greatest

importance, and an endless source of skilled mariners to man their fleets for commerce and defence. The chief characteristic of the respective territories is their varied nature, which allows many different forms of cultivation; but Spain has the advantage of being more to the south, and so enjoys a climate which is, on the whole, hotter and less changeable than that of Britain. The differences between the two countries begin with their size, as the area of Spain, including the Balearic Islands (but not the Canaries), is in round figures about 460,000 square kilometres, whereas that of the three countries, England, Scotland and Wales, is less than the half of that, say, 229,000 square kilometres. The population of the two countries is in inverse proportion; the Spanish census of 1910 gave a total of 19,950,000 souls against the 42,767,000 inhabitants of Great Britain in 1921. As might be expected, in view of the difference between their respective areas, Spain has longer and larger rivers than those of Great Britain, but the greater density of population and correspondingly larger financial resources have caused British rivers to be better utilised than the Spanish, at least as regards the estuaries at their mouths.

The requirements of the vigorous international trade of Britain have led to the building of many ports equipped with modern improvements and conveniences, whereas there are few Spanish ports with deep-water quays to which large modern cargo boats can moor whilst discharging their cargo at all states of the tide. For this reason there are only two or three ports on the coast of Spain (notwithstanding its

great length and many inlets) with safe anchorage in any weather for steamers of the largest size; these are the ports of call for the luxurious mail boats sailing between Europe and America. Spain has also many mountain ranges higher than the comparatively small British hills, and although those same ranges have the disadvantage of making it difficult and costly to build direct railways for rapid and cheap communications, they serve as barriers against the cold winds of Northern Europe, and as a shelter for those Spanish provinces which are richest in agricultural products; in their turn, these form the greater part of the country's wealth. The fruitful plains and fertile valleys of great Spanish rivers, such as the Douro, Tagus, Ebro, Guadiana, Guadalquivir, Segura and Minho, and of their many important tributaries, swallow a part of the immense wealth of water from the snowy deposits and underground springs which Nature, with prodigal hand, has placed on the summits and in the bosoms of the Spanish mountain ranges.

As a set-off against these great natural advantages, there is in the centre of Spain a broad and high table-land where agriculture struggles against a lack of water owing to the low rainfalls; and there exist also many mountains and sterile regions, of which there are few in Great Britain. The greatest contrast between the two countries is, however, in the occupations of their respective populations. Spain is an agricultural and mining country, and the chief source of its wealth is the soil, of which the surface produces in abundance an infinite variety of fruits, cereals,

vegetables, textile and medicinal plants, and from the bowels of which are taken immense quantities of mineral ores, not to mention coal, of which the output has increased greatly during the last few years. On the other hand, Great Britain (although it may be said with some justice that the prime basis of its wealth is also the coal which exists in abundance and of the best quality, a fact which facilitates and cheapens manufacture) is an industrial and commercial country, the majority of whose people earn their living by working in factories and offices, and by exchanging their manufactured products against the required foodstuffs and raw materials produced by agricultural countries.

The Phœnicians, a seafaring and commercial people, reached the southernmost part of the Iberian Peninsula more than a thousand years before Christ, finding it inhabited at that time by tribes which were neither more nor less civilised than the other inhabitants of Western Europe, and about whose origin and the place from whence they came nothing is known. It is believed that these early tribes were the descendants of a race of brown-skinned men, who came from India at a time of which no historical records remain. For want of a better name they have been called Iberians, and there is a theory that they were akin to the early Cretans. It is also known that a wave of Celtic peoples penetrated the Peninsula, even before the Phœnicians: it is not difficult to-day to notice what remains of this Celtic strain. The Phœnicians founded in Spain the colony of Gadir (Cadiz) which became one of the most valuable jewels

of the Phœnician Empire, an Empire better described as a confederation of almost autonomous cities, amongst which the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon stood out prominently on account of their wealth and political influence.

With the expanding power of Carthage, the men of Tyre found their own power and influence grow less as those of the Carthaginians increased; the latter finished by taking the place of the Phœnicians during the seventh century before Christ. From that date and for an interval of about 400 years history suffers an eclipse and is dumb, as is generally the case during transition periods. We know that the Carthaginians were called on in their turn to fight against the Greeks, whose influence spread from the Greek Archipelago along the northern coast of the Mediterranean as far as the Spanish territory of Catalonia. While this was happening the city of Rome, urged on by the warlike spirit and unbounded ambition of its inhabitants, had acquired a formidable position and made itself mistress of many of the Greek colonies. The attempts made by the Carthaginians in Gadir to seize cities in the eastern portion of Spain, which had been founded and were ruled by the Greeks, caused friction with the Romans, who had taken under their protection some of the communities attacked by the Carthaginians. Then followed the Punic Wars, finally ended by the defeat of Hannibal in Italy; an event which established firmly the supremacy of the Roman power.

Rome was the centre of the civilised world, and her population, estimated at 1,800,000 souls, con-

sumed large quantities of the products of the countries, including Spain, conquered by her victorious armies. Some reliable authorities estimate that the population of Spain reached the figure of 78,000,000 during the reign of the Emperor Julius Caesar, but it gradually diminished until 1688 A.D., when it did not exceed 8,000,000, beginning then to increase once more.

Political struggles between the Roman generals led to revolts amongst the Roman troops garrisoning the conquered territories, and these first signs of dissolution allowed the Gothic barbarians of Northern Europe to enlarge their domains and to share in the campaign carried on by the rivals for supremacy. These barbarians crossed the frontiers of Spain in 409 A.D., under the pretext of supporting the usurper Constantine, whose army had proclaimed him Emperor of Rome, and made themselves masters of the territories which the Romans in the days of their downfall had gradually to abandon before the rush of the northern peoples. During the centuries which we may call the migratory period, industry and commerce were crushed by incessant warfare; little work was done except in the trades and callings connected with the bare necessaries of life and the rudimentary equipment of the warriors. Even that was carried on inside castles or under protection, and for the almost exclusive benefit of the owner of the place. The few independent workers and traders who ventured to carry their goods to other markets were forced to pay exorbitant dues to each bandit chief whose territory they crossed in their journeys, and were frequently despoiled on the road of all they carried.

Endless wars continued to devastate fields and cities, and every little king and chieftain had his attention fixed on his land frontiers and communications.

The occupation of Spain by the barbarians from the north lasted altogether 300 years. The virile Visigoths completely dominated the weak Hispano-Romans. The most important part played by them was in intermarriage with the peoples who already lived in the Peninsula, and the imposition of a body of laws, based upon Roman law (*Lex Romana Visigothorum*) which continued to live throughout the Middle Ages.

Then came a change which made so strong an impression on Spain that traces of it are apparent on every hand to-day. The kingdom of the Visigoths was shattered by conquering Moslems from Northern Africa. In the year 720 Islam had reached from the Mediterranean to the Pyrenees—and from that date until 1492 Spain was ruled by men of Arab race. Perhaps it would be well to mention that between 1031 and 1248 the Moslem powers were African and Berber, adding a Hamitic strain to the mixed race which the earlier Islamic conquerors had defeated and ruled. In the Arab conquest of Spain we find the roots of many characteristics which exist to this day. The first effect of Mahometan domination was the vigorous development of agriculture, which up to that time was to a great extent neglected. Arabic became the language of government, and of what has always marched hand in hand with government in Spain—religion. Although it was never the language of the people, there are in Spanish many words, especially

in connection with agriculture, which can be traced directly to the speech of the ruling classes. The word "Ojalá"—meaning an invocation to the Deity—carries into contemporary every-day life in Spain the tradition of an appeal to Allah; the guttural J and G survive from Arabic and are to be found on every page of the Spanish dictionary.

From 1248 to 1474 was a period of reconquest by Christians and of general rearrangement, ending with general political union to the two most powerful provinces, Castile and Aragon. This period of Spanish history, however interesting it may be, must be dismissed with very few words. The reign of Fernando and Isabel is the subject of a masterly treatise by the historian Prescott. Let it suffice for the reader to know that for the first time in her history Spain obtained from them an administration which was vigorous, and, on the whole, efficient. The greatness of Spain began in their reign. Both national and international trade and industry, helped by the peace signed at Utrecht in 1475, underwent a great development, which was increased to a degree never seen before by the discovery of America, that great exploit which changed the whole face of the world and which opened new horizons to mankind. The whole glory of it belongs to Spain, and all Spaniards may be justly proud of it. The immense impulse which it gave to trade and the enormous material benefit which Europe derived from the working of that New World have been shared by every nation; perhaps nobody reaped greater profit from it than ourselves.

During the sixteenth century Spain reached the

summit of her commercial wealth and political power and held dominion over a large part of Europe, including the chief centres of production, which embraced the Flemish towns of the Low Countries.

The adventurous instincts of Christopher Columbus and the spirit of progress of the Catholic kings had made Spain the valuable and unequalled present of a New World, full of solid riches and capable of producing everything which could be desired. The ambition aroused by the possession of so much wealth caused her to lose her former habits of work, and to trust everything to blind Fortune and to the prestige of her arms. Filled with ardent faith and impetuous valour the Spaniards would not admit rivals of any kind; and their European and American policies soon created for them difficulties which all the gold in the world could not overcome. The material wealth of a nation has throughout the centuries been the cause of jealousy on the part of her neighbours. So it was with Spain. Other nations of Western Europe regarded her increasing wealth with jealous eyes. Most of them had adopted the principles of the Reformed Church, and feared the consequences of their possible domination by a country pledged to maintain public worship according to the rites of the Roman Church. Simultaneously the English, encouraged by the peace and comparatively good government which they enjoyed during the reign of Elizabeth, and also helped and taught by the Flemish immigrants, devoted themselves energetically to the development of their industries. Shipbuilding flourished, and a long coast-line could supply men accustomed to the tasks and

dangers of a seafaring life. Having the two chief requisites, men and ships, our rulers cast envious eyes on the proud Spanish galleys returning from America with rich cargoes of gold, silver and valuable merchandise; accordingly, they armed fast and strong ships with the single purpose of seizing those cargoes. The greedy policies of those days were mainly responsible for the struggle between Spaniards and Britons, as Spain wished to reserve for herself all the trade with the "Indies," the name by which America was known in the first centuries immediately after its discovery. Faced by a policy which threatened to keep their fellow-citizens in a permanently inferior position as regards their Spanish rivals, Queen Elizabeth's advisers granted letters of marque to all the English adventurers who offered to prepare expeditions for attacking and robbing the Spanish ships on the return voyage from America. Amongst these national heroes the figures of Drake, Frobisher, Hawkins and Raleigh were prominent. Those attempts at piracy confirmed the Spanish Government in its purpose to make war on England, the country which was the chief support of the enemies of the Roman Church and, therefore, of the Spanish monarchy, the principal pillar and support of that Church.

The threat from Spain aroused intense patriotism in England, where the inhabitants got ready for the struggle. It is known how the great Spanish Armada sailed from Spain after many delays, and not a few dissensions amongst its organisers, and how it failed completely.

Later expeditions met with the same lack of success,

and at last the project was abandoned, and James I having succeeded Elizabeth on the throne of what was now Great Britain, a treaty of "perpetual friendship, peace and forgetfulness" was signed between the two countries in 1604.

From this date, curiously enough, we see the beginnings of a decay which has continued since then. Rumours of wars, and wars sustained by an easily acquired wealth from the Americas, kept the rulers of Spain amused and the people in bondage. There were practically no occupations of importance except those of politician, priest, and soldier. Spain itself became impoverished, having grown accustomed to look across the Atlantic for its wealth. This source proved in time unreliable, but the politicians preferred vain hopes to reconstruction at home. The inevitable result was impoverishment. The Spanish people, crushed by the power of their rulers, remained apathetic. There were no Cavours, Mazzinis, Garibaldis, Wat Tylers, Dantons, Lenins or other reformers in this period of Spanish history. Spasmodic efforts were made by a few men who were not actuated by personal ambition, to help the stoical populace; they were unsuccessful. The unholy trinity always came out on top, sometimes in one form, sometimes in another. Despite the impoverishment which now penetrated to every corner of the country, pride and ambition remained blind to the realities of the situation. The losses which Spain suffered during the unrest and fierce struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries caused a marked diminution in the vital forces of the nation, so much so that the

beginnings of the nineteenth century saw her unable to embark on adventures outside her borders. Further enfeebled by the intense strife amongst claimants for power at home, Spain was sinking to the level of a second-rate power. Up to the present no man has been able to undo the evils suffered by the over-strained, fatalistic Spaniards at the hands of the unscrupulous and cynical governors of that period.

The history of nineteenth century Spain is that of revolts, reactions, civil wars, innumerable changes of Government, rivalries and *pronunciamientos* by dictators and would-be dictators. A lack of real progress accompanied the growth of a corruption which permeated every vein and artery of her body politic. The student of European history who is sufficiently interested should read Professor Butler Clarke's history of nineteenth century Spain—a sober and scholarly treatise published by the Cambridge University Press. From 1800 to 1900 other European countries were busy with the development of mechanical power; Spain has scarcely been affected by this phase. In many respects she is still mediæval.

If we are to understand Spain as she is to-day we must keep books of history at our elbow. The mixture of races, beginning with those old Dravidians and Egyptians, the sprinkling of Celtic blood, the adventurous Phœnicians, the Romans with their laws and religion, the war-like barbarians from the north, the Arabs with their fatalism, the Africans with their superstition, have all left their marks on the contemporary Spaniard. The greedy militarism of the

period of conquest, followed by the inability of rulers to retrench, and the racial characteristics which have been inherited from predatory invaders, all help to explain the present chaos. Since the days when militarism lost an external means of keeping itself alive, it has attempted to feed and generally succeeded in feeding upon the country. The growth of political corruption in the nineteenth century runs parallel with military change of face. Desintegration in such circumstances is inevitable. The one outstanding fact is that the Spanish people themselves (one must be quite clear on this point) in contrast to their rulers, have never approved the scheme of things. They have been powerless to effect even the slightest control over their destiny. They have been throughout the ages the victims of their soldiers and politicians. With an amazing stoicism they have suffered probably more than any other European people.

With this background always in mind, we may look at the state of Spain to-day.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION

La mala educación de la juventud es la ruina de las naciones.

(Inferior education of the young is the ruin of nations.)

I HAVE stated that in considering the present condition of Spain one must look to past history for an explanation of the many phenomena which puzzle the foreign observer. At the present moment there is perhaps no more cogent evidence of general backwardness than the illiteracy, with its usual offspring, which one finds on all sides.

A Spaniard resident in London recently wrote in one of our daily newspapers complaining of an allegation of the illiteracy of his people made by another writer in the same journal. That the allegation is not without reasonable foundation is easy enough to prove. In January 1921, a Madrid newspaper published the following amazing statement:

According to the latest official statistics there are lacking in Spain no fewer than 10,148 schools, of which total 571 are required in Barcelona, 430 in Madrid, and 561 in Murcia; in the province of Galicia alone there is a deficiency of 2,280.

By this is meant that of the total number of schools

required by what we should call "Education Acts," Spain is short of 10,148.

During a recent session in Madrid of the National Congress of Elementary School Teachers, a member of the Council, Señor Zulueta, pointed out that *less than a century ago*, that is to say, in 1825, King Fernando VII laid down that the examination to be passed by applicants for the post of female teachers should be in "catechism, reading and sewing"; in the case of elementary and secondary schools in Madrid, there should be added "writing and book-keeping," but a lack of knowledge of the last subject should not disqualify a woman from being a head mistress. The speaker added that "the progress which we have made since then ought to make us all optimists."

Señor Zulueta appears to be more easily satisfied than some of his compatriots. A speaker at a meeting held in Madrid to further the organisation of a great educational reform campaign is reported by the *Debate* of 12th March, 1922, to have pointed out that:

Illiteracy is a sign that society is committing a crime; if the best part of man is his understanding, it is a crime against God to leave him in a state which makes it impossible for him to have intercourse with his fellowmen.

On the question of education the *Correspondencia de España* said in 1921:

If he has time to do it, it would not be amiss for the Director-General of Elementary Education to find out how many national schools there are in Santiago (Galicia), and the number of places unfit from every educational point of view in which they are installed; he will then

understand with what justice people censure the National Government, which does not arrange for us to have even the number of schools which were considered necessary in 1857.

The result of this neglect of one of the primary duties of any Government is seen in what a Spanish journalist calls "the horrible statistics of illiteracy," which he gives as follows for some of the chief districts of the country:

Proportion of Illiterates.

	Per cent.		Per cent.
Santander	26·1	Saragossa	42·8
Bilbao	27·3	Seville	48·2
Madrid	28·3	Valencia	52·4
Valladolid	32·9	Murcia	72·0
Barcelona	34·9	Lorca	82·5

Although the latest then available, these figures are not the last ones published, and another set was issued shortly afterwards, and commented on as follows in *El Sol* of 10th March, 1921:

The fact is that the last set of satisfactory statistics on educational matters appeared in 1885, and since then we have gone backwards in the provision of proper statistics, seeing that neither the School Census of 1903, nor the Arrangement of 1908 was a real set of statistics, and both contain many defects through the undue haste with which they were made. . . . For the reasons given above, the "Spanish Statistical Annual" does not contain the most essential figures relating to elementary education, and we still do not know the exact number of schools in Spain, their classes, scholars on the rolls, attendance, etc., nor the number and condition of school buildings. The only figures we have are those relating

to the cost of maintaining schools and teachers, and we already know the total because they appear in the Budget estimates. The most interesting figures are those of the expense per inhabitant in various provinces, and the percentage of illiterates in the same districts. We quote a few of those figures to show that it is not the reputedly richest provinces which spend most money on education, taking the four provinces which spend the least in proportion to their population, and the four which spend most, including also the cities of Madrid and Barcelona for the sake of comparison

Province	Cost per inhabitant.	Percentage of Illiterates.
Canary Islands	6 pence.	54
Madrid (City)	6·8 ,,	25
Cadiz	13 ,,	44
Jaen	14·8 ,,	28
Murcia	15 ,,	51
Barcelona (City)	19·6 ,,	8
Burgos	46·3 ,,	3
Alava	49·2 ,,	5
Leon	57·4 ,,	7
Soria	60·7 ,,	10

The relatively small percentage (25 in the capital of the country !) of illiterates in Madrid and Barcelona, and probably in Jaen also, in spite of the miserably small contribution of money per inhabitant, is due to the efforts of the private or non-provided schools in those districts.

As regards secondary education, the majority of Spanish students were attending private institutions, as may be seen from the following figures :

Pupils in Secondary Schools.	National	Private.
Total : 52,169 being	31 per cent.	69 per cent.

In Madrid itself only 15 per cent. of secondary

scholars attend national schools, of which there were only three, instead of the eight or ten which the city requires. Señor Lorenzo Luzuriaga points out that *Spain has only* 52,169 *pupils in secondary schools, against almost a million in similar institutions in England* with only double the population, and remarks that it is a proof that, in Spain, only those who attend a university, or the sons of rich parents, are sent to anything more than an elementary school. University students at the same date numbered 22,333, distributed amongst twelve universities (eleven in Spain itself, and one in the Canary Islands). Madrid having most with 8,330, and Oviedo the fewest with 581 students.

A painful impression was made on all patriotic Spaniards by the publication of this official statement on public education, and about a month later the Minister of Education pointed out that in the Budget for the year in which the statistics were published there was a credit of £20,000 for building new small elementary schools, costing not more than £1,000 each, but no funds at all for increasing the accommodation in secondary schools. The Minister disclaimed all responsibility for "this lamentable state of things," and pointed out that he had already told the Treasury that certain restrictions to which he referred had been removed. Nevertheless, no more funds could be obtained. *El Imparcial* of 21st April reported as follows:

It is said that a meeting will shortly be held of members representing all the parliamentary groups, to pass resolutions about these matters in support of the demand of

the Ministry of Education for a supplementary estimate to be devoted to founding and building schools.

That the matter was not allowed to be forgotten, as so often happens in Spain, is shown by an article in the *Correspondencia de España* of June 16th, that is to say, less than two months after the Minister had issued the statement mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The article is worthy of a place here:

Our Members of Parliament were very serious yesterday afternoon, and as this seldom occurs it ought to be noted. By saying they were serious we wish to convey that they discussed without great haste an important matter which deeply affects national life: education. The record of the proceedings is worth reading to-day, although it is usually colourless, unsubstantial and anodyne. He who reads the part devoted yesterday to educational matters will find more than a few instructive and lamentable things. It would appear that we Spaniards look upon everything to do with our public education as though it were a game. "We begin by attaching slight importance to the ministry charged with the care of such trivial matters. Politicans call it the "Ministry of Entrance," which means that the holder of the office is a ministerial apprentice, who is in office for the first time, and who may or may not have devoted his attention and intellectual activity to educational problems. "Very slight attention is paid to its Estimates when the Budget is being discussed, both by its chief and by the Members of Parliament who delude themselves into thinking that they are discussing the Budget. So we go on; one formal budget is followed by another, and we never attain the ideal of those who, like Costa, would like to defend their native country with books in their hands, by devoting to educational requirements what is necessary in order to put an end to the pretence in which

we live. The present state of public education in this country was minutely dissected in Congress yesterday: places without schools, or with filthy buildings called schools; institutes, universities, and specialised schools, which are merely incubators of academical degrees held by persons who are not qualified to earn a living by them, nor to be useful to the country in the sphere of culture. In any country a little more impressionable than ours, the criticism in the Chamber yesterday of our public educational system would cause an extraordinary upheaval, which would sweep away the methods which have so greatly contributed to our present backwardness in cultural matters. We fear greatly, however, that as in so many cases, it will all turn out to be nothing but talk.

The same newspaper returned to the charge the following day and said:

If abstention (by politicians in educational matters) is fatal, interference is much more dangerous and has the most serious consequences. In proof of this we see what has happened in Saragossa, where the professors and students of the university there are in revolt because politics were brought into the internal administration. Unfortunately politicians care very little about such protests. On the other hand it is very important for them, if they are always to hold the strings in their hands, that they should, if possible, be able to dispose of the factors which intervene to impart instruction. For many years politics have played a regrettable part in the appointment of professors, and *many gentlemen became professors for no other reason than that of having joined a political brotherhood.* Matters reached such a scandalous pitch that a Minister found it necessary to make radical alterations in the then existing methods for forming the boards of appointment. That is now a matter of history, but apparently the politicians cannot

resign themselves to being shut out, as the case of Saragossa shows. . . . Decidedly, we do not reform ourselves.

In 1921 there were 190 inspectors of national schools in Spain, and no doubt many of them were conscientious men who took their duties seriously. They held a congress in Madrid in November of that year, and drew up a long programme of reforms which they deemed to be necessary in the existing system. Various public men interested in education gave lectures also, but to-day we see little result from all these efforts.

At the end of 1921 there were actually *eighteen* national schools existing on paper, with teaching staffs, which had no real existence because there was no building provided for them; yet there are many children of school age in the capital (optimists put the number at 20,000) who cannot go to school for want of accommodation. The Madrid Technical School has a staff of competent professors, and its material is excellent, but the theory classes and the library are in an old and tumbled-down house, the state of which greatly interferes with proper teaching. The workshops are a long way from it, and are inadequately equipped owing to lack of space in which to erect the apparatus which had already been bought.

In connection with an Order in Council dated 25th May 1900, which ordered schools to be provided in manufacturing establishments, a reminder from the Ministry of Education was published in the *Gazette* of 26th January 1922. It includes the following words, which I transcribe because they

speak volumes regarding the administration of the law in Spain, not only in educational matters, but in almost everything else which does not imply reaction or repression :

In view of the fact that, owing to the time (twenty-one and a half years !) which has elapsed since it (the Order) was promulgated *it may have been forgotten by the authorities whose duty it was to give effect to the Order.*

Is any comment necessary ? This matter may be put side by side with the case commented on in the *Libertad* of 17th February, 1922, which points out that in the " Official Bulletin " of the province of Navarre dated 30th November previous, there was a notice of sale which contained what the commentator very rightly describes as a " monstrosity," as follows : " Lizarraga, 28th November, 1921. For the Mayor, WHO DOES NOT KNOW HOW, (signed) MANUEL NAVARRO." A mayor unable to sign his name !

Politics, the eternal curse of Spain, have much to do with the backwardness of education there, just as they are responsible for nearly all the country's ills. A slight reference was made in an earlier paragraph to trouble caused at Saragossa University over the appointment of professors, but much worse things than that happen. Truly, the lot of the school teacher, especially the country school teacher, is not a bed of roses in many parts of Spain ; in some places there is actually danger to life. All the greater must be the honour and respect felt for the many teachers of both sexes who perform their duties under such difficult and trying circumstances. Although usually far below the standard required in Great Britain, they at

least possess much greater knowledge than the vast majority of even the parents of their scholars, yet they have to struggle along on a pittance of £80 or £100 per annum. Their difficulties are hinted at in the following extract from an article by Dr. Sidonio Pintado in the *Libertad*, commenting on measures ordered by the then Minister of Education, Señor Silió, for the drawing up of a new curriculum to be followed in all elementary schools in Spain. Dr Pintado says :

> In view of Señor Silió's political ties, and in this country where educational matters become fields for stupid struggles between Radicals and Conservatives, there would be the inconvenience that each Minister holding that portfolio would issue a new curriculum based on a different creed.

It may be mentioned here that at the Inspectors' Congress already referred to, with the Minister, Señor Silió, in the chair, the inspector for Valladolid declared, without meeting with any denial, that as regards the provision of schools, *Spain is to-day worse off relatively* than she was in 1857 !

I have just said that school teachers in Spain sometimes worked even at the risk of their lives. All Spanish teachers in Government employ do not enjoy equal rights, and a certain section of them bear the official distinguishing label of "Teachers with limited rights." These men are united in an association of their own, which held a congress in Madrid in December, 1921. Resolutions were passed to the effect that all schoolmasters should be placed on the same footing as other civil servants ; that favouritism

should not be shown in transfers and similar matters: and that an official organ of the Association should be published to support their demands. Attention was called to the low salary paid, which is £80 per annum, and it was resolved to ask the Minister of Education to repay the money found by the teachers out of their own pockets to purchase educational material for adults. In reporting the proceedings several newspapers stated:

The Congress made an energetic protest against the frequent occasions on which schoolmasters have been the victims of assassins, on account of their relations with rural political bosses ("caciques") and especially against the recent murder of two schoolmasters in the provinces of Oviedo and Santander.

Murder is not the only thing of which country school teachers are frequently victims; one or two examples will suffice to show this. *El Sol* of 24th November, 1921, says:

A female professor in Santiago, Doña Rosa Gorgori, was charged with accepting bribes when acting as one of the examiners of candidates for diplomas as schoolmistresses. Owing to lack of evidence she was acquitted, but the successful candidates were not allowed to take the posts to which they had been appointed. They now wish to know what is going to be done to end a situation caused by a matter which has nothing to do with them. There are forty-six women teachers concerned, and they have suffered heavy loss. We hope that the Minister of Education will hurry up the minutes which refer to this matter, to put an end to an anomaly which leaves without employment so many schoolmistresses who earned their posts in an honourable manner.

Señor Eduardo Rodriguez Villanueva was a school teacher at Marchena (Seville) for forty-nine years, but was at last pensioned off with £35 per annum. Such, at least, was the interpretation given to the law by the Provincial Governor of Seville on 13th April, 1920, when he instructed the municipality of Marchena to pay Señor Rodriguez one-half of the splendid (*sic*) salary of £70, which he had enjoyed for so long. According to an article in *El Sol* of 11th June, 1921, the policies of the ex-teacher did not suit the local political boss, and the pension was not paid. Señor Rodriguez was nearly eighty years of age and destitute. Friends took the matter up on his behalf, and the successor of the Provincial Governor pressed the matter on the attention of the Marchena authorities, who thereupon issued a statement, saying that:

We have no official news of the decision, and only at the request of the Governor, Señor Silió, a sum of £40 is provided in the current year's estimates, being £35 for this year's pension, and £5 on account of pension unpaid and overdue.

The writer of the article asked if a verbal instruction from a governor was sufficient authority for paying money for which the Marchena municipality denied its liability, and pleaded for the complete clearing up of the affair so that the old man might receive all his overdue pension in full before he died.

A very well-known and much-travelled Spanish writer, Don José M. Salaverria, appealed on 11th June, 1921, in the columns of *A.B.C.* for a new and comprehensive plan of public education in Spain. Amongst other things he said:

It is true that politicians know more than we writers do about the psychology of the crowd. It is easy to sway the public by talking to it about great works to be done and great undertakings to be formed, but is it possibly more arduous to secure public support for measures entailing expense, for professors, laboratories, lecture halls and schools? A man who assumed the responsibility for carrying out a work of such vast proportions would become the most famous and highly praised politician in Spain.

It is disappointing, however, to find Señor Salaverria suggesting at the end of his article, and in spite of the terrible record of the results of official negligence, that the time has come for the Spanish Government to take over the management of certain excellent educational establishments founded and still run by foreigners in Spain. Like so many other Spaniards who belong to the most conservative parties in Spain, Señor Salaverria suffers from that xenofobia, which has its roots in religious creeds and has been one of the main causes of Spain's backwardness. Another example of the same mental attitude is found in the inspired campaign against the proposal to establish in Spain something after the nature of the Y.M.C.A. The clerical paper, *El Debate*, referred to that proposal as follows:

An article signed by a well-known pen-name has suggested the desirability of founding in Spain an association similar to that which is universally known as Y.M.C.A. It is not possible to doubt, that in several countries, that association has produced good results, both materially and culturally; nor may we doubt the upright and praiseworthy intention of the writer and the

publisher of the articles. We think it necessary, nevertheless, to give a short explanation in order to avoid any mistake on the matter itself, and possibly mistaken interpretations of the good intention behind the initiative. The Y.M.C.A. is a genuinely Protestant association. In France, during the war, its work was purely humanitarian, and it carried on no religious propaganda. Elsewhere, and even in France since the war, the Protestant propaganda of the Y.M.C.A. has been evident enough to lead the Vatican to call the attention of Roman Catholics to its dangers. Catholics must understand, therefore, that if an association of the apparent nature of the Y.M.C.A. were to be founded in Spain, *it might be very dangerous to take as a pattern the Protestant organisation to which we refer*. We have been asked not to cause the suggested initiative to fail. We are assured that it is a question of an absolutely neutral association, which does not want to fight anything; that even if the British Y.M.C.A. subsidises the Spanish institution, the latter will be managed and ruled by Spaniards; we are asked to give our assistance, and offered part of the control. We are willing to admit that all this was said to us in good faith and with upright intentions, but those statements compel us, of course, to accentuate and underline our warning to Spanish Catholics, for whom there can be no hesitation between those words, however honourable they may be, and the advice of the Holy See; that would settle the matter even without counting two circumstances which influence us greatly. The first is that the Spanish Y.M.C.A., subsidised by the British one (which is geniunely Protestant) could not fail to be influenced by those who helped it at birth, giving it name, money and method of organisation; against that no guarantee of neutrality is of any use. The second is that, even without that, and with the greatest possibility and guarantee of neutrality, an association with aims of cultural proselytism amongst

young men, absolutely cannot maintain itself neutral in Spain, whether that neutrality is desired or not by those who govern it, be they Catholics or anti-Catholics, from the moment of its inauguration. Better still, if it is not born Catholic, but can call itself neutral, there is the greatest possibility of its being anti-Catholic from the first day onwards. We do not quote instances, in order to avoid discussions, but, no doubt, the reader will remember more than one case. Let Catholics, therefore, be on their guard against a plan which is condemned *even though only implicitly*, by the Holy See, and they may count on our continuing to give attention to the matter if necessary.

The reader will see for himself from the last paragraph that the problem of education in Spain has more depths and recesses, more nooks and corners, more twistings and windings, than he would be apt to imagine at first sight of it. The net result, so far as the masses of the people are concerned, is the illiteracy to which the statistics and the opinions quoted bear an eloquent testimony. Such illiteracy in the twentieth century cannot but engender a blindness and helplessness on the part of its victims. Before progressive government can be thoroughly established in Spain there must be a fairly well educated populace. It is because the men who have of late ruled Spain fear progress—which would, of course, result in their obliteration—that education has been neglected. They have, at all events, been intelligent enough to see where danger, from their point of view, lies. Education would be the salvation of Spain; but a nation cannot be educated in a day.

CHAPTER III

HEALTH, HOUSING, AND SANITATION

Barro y cal
Encubren mucho mal.
SPANISH PROVERB.
(Brick and lime conceal much evil.)

THERE is perhaps no better prelude to forming an estimate of a nation's civilisation and culture than an investigation of the housing, health and sanitary arrangements of the people. Unpleasant as such an investigation proves itself to be in the case of Spain, it throws much light upon the mentality of rulers and ruled, and immediately gives one so clear an insight into what are typically Spanish methods, that to omit it in a book of this nature, is merely to suppress the most cogent evidence one can possibly adduce of the present appalling state of the country. Further reasons have compelled me to give an account of housing, health and sanitation in Spain to-day. One is that the bad conditions soon become obvious to all but the most superficial observer. Another is that, as far as I am aware, the subject has been carefully avoided by all English writers on Spanish affairs and conditions. It is unnecessary to discuss the reasons for such an omission. However, having decided to devote a chapter to an extremely un-

pleasant phase of Spanish life, I deem it a duty to warn those of my readers who dislike the distasteful, that a perusal of some of these pages may be avoided. No honest account of Spain to-day can be complete without a statement of the conditions as they are.

We hear a good deal from time to time about the immense improvements which have taken place in Madrid, and to a smaller extent in most of the other large cities. Newspaper correspondents currying favour with local personages, who can be so useful to them in their work, and casual travellers desirous of pleasing their friends after a hurried visit made in conditions of the greatest comfort and luxury, all unite in declaring that the old Madrid of even ten years ago has disappeared or is rapidly disappearing, and that the Spanish capital may now be counted amongst the finest, handsomest and most up-to-date cities of Europe. It cannot be denied that large sums of money "earned" during the war have been re-invested in building operations, and that many magnificent blocks of flats and business premises may now be seen on most of the chief roads of the city. Great progress has been made with the extension of the Gran Via, or (to give it its full name) Avenida del Conde de Peñalver, which is now within reasonable distance of its completion. The Madrid Municipality, after a period of neglect, has spent large sums on making or improving the pavement of some of the chief roads, notably, the Calle de Alcalá, and the series of fine boulevards which run from the Prado Museum to the Race Course; whilst a few secondary,

but still important, streets have also been considerably improved and are now suitable for modern motor traffic. It is along these avenues and streets that strangers to Madrid, whether those who merely spend two or three nights there on their way to or from the tourists districts in Andalusia, or others who remain for a somewhat longer period, are usually taken or make their own way when visiting the chief places of interest in the modern city. The modern hotels, which have done so much to increase the comfort of those who visit the Spanish capital, are all also to be found on the same thoroughfares. There is perhaps no finer promenade in Europe than the long stretch of boulevards formed by the three "Paseos" of El Prado, Los Recoletos, and La Castellana. The visitor who is driven along them in a comfortable motor car, or taken by a fine asphalted road to the Rose Garden, in the famous Retiro Park near by, may be excused for imagining that what he has seen and experienced is typical of all the roads of Madrid.

Until quite recently, however, he could not get to the more plebeian neighbourhood of the Western Park without being compelled to pass through streets, of which the defective pavements and numerous odours are calculated to make a radical change in his first impressions. By whichever route the journey is made, the way lies through the more modern parts of Madrid and does not touch the old city at a single point. Large new blocks of flats and many palatial private houses will be found on every hand, mingled with inferior property and retail businesses, including

coal stores, smiths' forges, and dairies with their cow-sheds. Many of these are to be found on the ground floor of the same buildings, of which the upper stories are divided into expensive flats.

There is an abundance of superficial evidence that Madrid is making rapid strides in the direction of material re-construction. The peculiar idiosyncrasy which leads Spaniards to invest their spare capital in any form of real estate, but preferably house property in towns and cities, will probably mislead a stranger into thinking that there is every justification for the claims made on behalf of Madrid as an up-to-date city of the first rank. If, however, he is not carried away by external appearance, and can ask a few questions regarding those matters which do not appear on the surface, it is more than likely that he will receive some real shocks, and will alter radically his favourable impressions. Fine tenements with handsome exteriors, electric lifts and central heating—by no means all of them can claim to possess the last-mentioned advantage—are all very well in their way. A prospective tenant is apt to ask himself how he is to reach them, and assuming that he is able to answer that question satisfactorily (a very real problem in many instances) what guarantees exist that the health of his family will be maintained there? It is at this point that one begins to separate appearances from realities.

The city authorities of Madrid have improved the surface of many of their chief streets, and many private individuals have erected, on any site which they could obtain at a reasonable price, blocks of

flats. These are let in every case at rents very much higher than anything known in the same class of Madrid life before the war, or than are now paid by householders who still live in the same houses as then. But *practically nothing* has been done to improve the pre-war sanitary condition of the city, or to make provision for the requirements of the immense number of new buildings and tens of thousands of additional inhabitants. These new tenements are in many cases far from being what their exterior would lead one to suppose. In *La Correspondencia de España* of 23rd November, 1921, Don Alberto Insua, a well-known journalist, writes as follows about the buildings to which I refer :

The ingenuity of the people almost always hits the nail on the head. It has given the nickname of " cage-houses " to the buildings which are being erected in Madrid so rapidly, and as though by enchantment. They are so frail, so jerry-built, that they do not deserve the name of houses, but that of bird-cages. They usually consist of seven floors, each of four flats ; they are built anyhow, with the worst possible materials. It is true that they have a lift, a telephone in the porter's lodge, and a bathroom. These pretended comforts are just what cause the greatest disappointment to the tenant. Like the tramcars, the lift works " when there is a current." The utility of the telephone in the porter's lodge is remote, and the bathroom can only be used at the expense of a whole bag of coal. A lady frightened her neighbours by making a hole in the wall when she tried to drive in a nail. The walls and floors are so thin that every tenant can hear his neighbour's conversation. Everything is audible throughout the building ; the young lady who plays the piano ; the children running along the passages ;

the maid singing—if it can be called singing—at her work; the moving of furniture; the chopping of sticks; the weeping of infants; in fact, every intimate noise which should properly be confined to the house where it is made. The only advantage of this fluidity of the walls, of this acoustic promiscuity, is that some couples who fear gossip by their neighbours quarrel less than they would under other conditions, and do not throw the plates at each other. But it is better not to speak of this "unique advantage" of the cage-houses, lest their owners take it into consideration and raise the rent.

A very large proportion of the buildings in Madrid, whether in the business quarters or in the residential districts and outer suburbs, is formed of large edifices with a single door in the centre, through which *all* the service of the house must pass. Dr. Cesar Chicote makes the following remark in regard to the overcrowding of these "mansions": "In Villacañas, without going any further, there are Spanish cave-dwellers. In Madrid, which is nearer still, *there are* 6,235 *persons living in only* 15 *houses.*"

Complete statistics of the state of housing, either in Madrid or in the provinces, are unavailable—since they do not exist. But this example given by Dr. Chicote is not an exaggeration. Excepting the houses of the very wealthy the same overcrowding exists everywhere in the capital—and to a lesser degree in the provincial cities and towns. It may be said with justice that other European countries are faced with a housing problem. But surely, nowhere is it as intense as in Spain, and, if we add bad sanitation to overcrowding, it is easy to understand why typhoid

fever is endemic in the Spanish capital. The following is a list of deaths from that cause in 1920 :

January	72	July	29
February	29	August	58
March	41	September	42
April	65	October	41
May	35	November	25
June	29	December	39

A total of 505 deaths from typhoid fever in Madrid for one year only, during which the total number registered throughout Spain reached the appalling figure of 7,039 deaths. The following Press comments may also be quoted :

" Madrid is a fundamentally healthy city. Every form of neglect, complete ignorance, and an entire lack of morality on the part of its city councils have been necessary to turn it into the ' city of death.' Its 3,000 hours of sun each year, its very abundant water supply (fifty-six gallons daily per inhabitant) and the vivifying wind from the Guadarrama (which is so unjustly calumniated), cannot prevent a continual increase in the death-rate of the city." (*La Voz*, 1st November, 1921.)

" The urbanisation of the outer suburbs was always an insoluble problem, but it can be solved by imposing a special rate on the land in that district, the money so obtained to be employed exclusively in providing what is now lacking there. It is better to make a new Madrid than to patch up the old one. Unless something is done soon, Madrid will soon have 20,000 cesspools in its outer suburbs." (The MARQUIS OF VILLABRÁGIMA, at a meeting of the City Council, on 12th November, 1921.)

" Water is taken from the River Manzanares, below the place where the sewerage of Madrid is discharged into it, for watering the market-gardens there situated. That

water is not sterilised, although it also contains the drainage from the hospitals. An enquiry, begun years ago in the Ministry of Public Works, has now been taken up again, and as the Minister is a friend of mine, I have written him a very pressing letter to ask him not to let the matter drag." (SENOR SERRANO JOVER, Mayor *pro tem.* of Madrid, as reported in *El Debate*, of 29th December, 1921.)

It is amazing to think that to-day *one part of Madrid is completely, and another to a great extent*, dependent on earth-closets or middens for the disposal of its sewage. There are not even septic wells for the purpose of destroying it or rendering it harmless! Some attempts have been made to improve these nauseating conditions. During the end of 1921 and beginning of 1922 the office of Mayor of Madrid was held by the Marquis of Villabrágima, son of the Liberal leader. Count Romanones, and himself well-known in this country. The young marquis only held the office for a few months, between the resignation of one mayor and the end of the period for which the latter had been appointed; but he showed a praiseworthy disposition to attack the many problems of municipal life which his predecessors had merely shelved. In that way he justified the confidence which is beginning to be felt in the younger generation of public men in Spain. Amongst numerous other matters the problem of sanitation was one of the most urgent, as may be quickly seen from a perusal of the Spanish Press of the period, exemplified in the extracts which I give. Having previously consulted the Property Owners' Association, and received on

9th January, 1922, the necessary authority from the City Council, the Marquis of Villabrágima signed, as Mayor of Madrid, a long decree or bye-law of thirteen articles, the first of which reads as follows:

Article I. The purpose of the present bye-law is to fix the rules and conditions which are to be observed by the proprietors of buildings situated in places or streets where there is no official sewerage system for collection of rain water and fecal matters.

After giving detailed specifications for the carrying out of the work of providing septic tanks in place of the existing middens or earth-closets, the document concedes in Article XII a term of five years for effecting the required change of system. The existing chaotic and disgraceful state of affairs was referred to in the last article, No. XIII, which calls on all proprietors who have not constructed their middens and earth-closets in accordance with the municipal bye-laws even then in force, to present plans for the necessary alterations within two months, and orders all such alterations to be completely carried out within a maximum period of six months, counted from the date on which they are officially approved. For those who know Spain, and the ease with which influential persons, and there are many such in the landlord class, can escape obedience to official regulations and bye-laws, this means that nothing would be done. It would be interesting to learn how many, if any, septic tanks have been installed, or middens modified, since the date of publication of the decree in question.

It is not to be expected that, when sanitary matters are so neglected in the capital of the country, its administrative centre and the chief residence of the Spanish Court and artistocracy, that they should be much better attended to in other places. Indeed, the whole country clamours for attention, but it would be unjust to the partially autonomous regions of the Biscayan provinces and Cataluña not to recognise that they form to some extent an exception to the general rule, and that public hygiene in all its multiple phases has greater attention and is better provided for in those districts than elsewhere. The fact remains, that all over Spain there are abundant openings for capitalists who will undertake the work of installing drainage systems and waterworks, in places where these indispensable adjuncts of civilisation are either lamentably defective and insufficient for present needs or entirely non-existent. It is only fair to add that a large and increasing number of Spaniards is also convinced of the absolute necessity of many such enterprises, and does its utmost through the columns of the daily Press or by means of articles in the few technical journals—which are, unfortunately, seldom read by the general public—to remind the authorities of their duties under this head, and to spur them into action. It is a pity that the jealousy felt by a few large manufacturers and capitalists towards the hitherto somewhat feeble efforts made by foreign financiers and contractors to help in the work of progress and development, should have sufficed to secure the passing of the law of 1917, which limits to a very small proportion of the whole, the amount of

foreign capital and control which may be employed in Spanish undertakings. It lays down as a general rule, to which few exceptions are allowed, that only 10 per cent. of the material and machinery of such undertakings may be imported from abroad. This law even goes so far as to enact that not more than 20 per cent. of the salaries paid by any firm working under that law shall be paid to foreign employees of any kind; the object being to secure that Spaniards themselves shall have the lion's share of all work done in the country. Even though the patriotic intention at the back of such stipulations must be recognised, it must also be pointed out that they form an enormous obstacle in the way of progress, and make it practically impossible to hope that Spain will attain within any reasonable period that state of sanitation, comfort, and efficiency which has been enjoyed for many years by other Western nations. In spite of the large increase of wealth, directly attributable to the Great War, there is not yet enough available for the purposes mentioned, and a very large proportion of the existing capital is in the hands of persons who would consider it an act of supreme folly to lend it to any public authority. Past experience and everything around them show that little but waste, inefficiency and interminable delay can be expected from the vast majority of public administrators. As regards private undertakings, the situation, though different, is but little better. Every one who knows Spain is aware that one of the chief characteristics of the nation is mutual distrust. The spirit of co-operation is almost entirely lacking, and is more manifest

amongst the poorer classes than anywhere else; but even there it would be destroyed immediately by the intervention of any kind of authority or superior person. The middle classes leave their savings in the banks when unable to employ them in their own business, or invest them, when large enough, in real estate, especially house property. Very few people are sufficiently confiding—a Spaniard would say ingenuous—to invest their money in industrial, commercial, or public works undertakings of any kind, over the management of which they themselves can have only the inadequate and illusory control of a mere shareholder. For this reason it is almost impossible to raise by popular subscription the capital required for any great works of public sanitation in Spain. It would be unfair to give the impression that all Spaniards are unaware of the bad state of sanitation. The following comment speaks for itself:

> Until we have in operation the public services which are now lacking, and until the completion of the existing ones which are deficient, Madrid will be neither a European nor a modern city; although there are antiquated and grotesque people among us who maintain the contrary. (Madrid City Councillor GARCIA CORTÉS, in *Heraldo de Madrid*, of 19th May, 1921.)

One of the most extraordinary sights of Madrid, especially in its residential and outer suburbs, is the collection and disposal of household refuse. The dustman and his cart form such an integral part of the life of a modern civilised city, and their visits are so regular, and the work for the most part so quietly and unobtrusively performed, that they are accepted

as an essential part of the organisation which makes life possible and tolerable in these colossal concentration camps of all types and classes of humanity. For the most part the street-cleaning departments of our borough and urban councils accomplish their tasks with the minimum of inconvenience to the community, and they have been brought in most places to a very high state of efficiency. Many visitors to Madrid, who sleep in hotels and who often do not begin their daily programme of sight-seeing until the morning is well advanced, may easily be misled into believing that in this respect, at any rate, there is no great difference between the capital of Spain and any large town in their own country. Nothing, however, could be more mistaken than such an idea. The collection of house refuse in Madrid is effected by means which leaves a foreigner gaping with astonishment as soon as he becomes aware of them. In theory there is not a great difference between the system in Madrid and that employed in London. The municipality possesses a number of quite up-to-date motor lorries with sliding covers. Very occasionally one of these lorries may be seen in the streets of the city, but at such time it is always being driven at its highest speed over the rough pavement, and has not yet been known to gather refuse from door to door. In its place, and in the very centre of the city, are carts drawn by horses, which is, of course, the usual practice in other lands. In Madrid one is forced to the conclusion that the city dust-carts are never new. It is true that the nature of the work done with a dust-cart is not conducive to the retaining of a new or

elegant appearance; but even though the paint be scratched or dirty, or rubbed off, it does not follow as a matter of course that the woodwork should be always broken and defective, nor the covers, if there be any such, torn and useless for their purpose; that is, nevertheless, the usual impression conveyed by a glimpse of a Madrid dust-cart, when the inquisitive visitor has the dubiously good fortune to meet one. As soon as one reaches the residential districts the dust-cart becomes of secondary importance, its place being taken by small two-wheeled carts drawn by ponies, mules, or even donkeys, or by the same animals carrying panniers, and escorted by at least two, but frequently more, of the most disreputable looking specimens of feminine humanity that can well be imagined.

In the case of large private houses the women in charge of the carts can be induced to enter the house and carry the dustbin out themselves, unless, which is more frequent, they empty it into their own flexible, but strongly woven, basket of local manufacture, in which they sometimes carry on their hips or shoulders astonishingly heavy weights. When the maid of the house does the work herself, she empties her bin into a similar basket, and returns upstairs with her own empty. In due course the female scavengers come along; by mutual arrangement each has a definite territory, and there is no overlapping nor fighting for custom. The women squat down on the edge of the pavement or on a heap of rubbish, and proceed to sort and examine with their bare hands the indescribable assortment of things which issue every day

from the residences of from twelve to thirty families, according to the number of flats in the building. In all countries there is on the average some waste in the preparation of food, although that evil is perhaps a little less prevalent than before in lands which were compelled to live on a system of rationing during the Great War. Spain never knew what such a thing meant, and one of the details of national character which strike the modern visitor to the country most forcibly, is the heartiness of the people's appetite and its extravagance in the matters of food. It is well known that domestic servants everywhere are apt to be careless where only their employers' interests are concerned; Spain forms no exception in this matter. There is also the fact that, owing partly to the heat in summer, which makes it impossible to preserve food from one day to another as is done in England, and to the Spaniard's dislike in general to seeing any dish a second time, a very large quantity of perishable matter is daily thrown away in Spain. The average Spaniard, man or woman, is also less disposed to keep, or less capable of mending, personal and domestic articles, which, although momentarily put out of action, might be repaired with the greatest ease and very little trouble. In the case of dwellers in flats, everything which has ceased to be of use, and is not big enough to sell separately, must be got rid of by means of the dustbin, and the result is, as already hinted, the queerest and most unsavoury hodge-podge that can be imagined.

The owners of these private dust-carts are for the most part nursery gardeners in the outskirts of the

city. One of the reasons always adduced in favour of the continuance of this primitive and unhygienic system of removal of refuse, by those persons who are naturally and temperamentally opposed to all change and reform, is that a systematic, official collection and destruction of household refuse would deprive a lot of hardworking and worthy people, of a cheap and valuable supply of manure for the purpose of growing the vegetables required by the population. According to Señor Garcia Cortés, whose words I have quoted, the amount of refuse thrown into the Madrid dustbins about the middle of the year 1921 was some 1,200 tons daily, of which the municipal motor lorries and horse carts, working all day and sometimes at night, could only deal with one-third part; the remainder is handled by the private dustmen mentioned above. Their numbers total about 1,400, grouped in two societies or trade unions, one of about 800, which comprises those who own a cart, and another, of which the members only possess donkeys, which carry the refuse away in large woven receptacles, placed like saddle-bags, perched on the top of which the worker, usually a woman, also travels. The number of persons actually working with these carts and donkeys is calculated at about 3,000.

The objects of the sorting done at the house door by the collectors of the refuse are manifold. First, there is the separation of all the matter which can be used as manure. This occasionally includes scraps of edible food, which the sorters place in a special receptacle to carry home, or which they may be seen contentedly eating as they proceed with their task;

a remarkable testimony to their utter poverty and degradation. Separate baskets are filled with metal or textile or other objects which are marketable to the "rag-and-bone" merchants. A separate heap is made of anything easily combustible and not worth carrying away. To this heap a light is set on the public roadway, and as the materials of the bonfire are not free from fats and grease owing to the promiscuity of the contents of the dustbins, it may be easily realised the odours borne on the fresh morning breeze by no means resemble the perfumed zephyrs of Araby. Add to the smoke thereby made, the cloud of fine ash caused by the riddling of the cinders and carried a considerable distance by the wind which frequently blows, and there will be no difficulty in understanding why the well-to-do Madrileño prefers to lie late a-bed, rather than make his way to work or pleasure in such circumstances. Foreigners have no remedy but to submit to the local customs, as it would be impracticable and too expensive, even if not considered insulting to the proud authorities, for them to arrange a dust-cart service of their own. As my duties called me to work comparatively early, I have frequently been forced to observe the operations of the private scavengers, and I have been half suffocated by a pestilential smoke from their improvised bonfire, only a few yards outside the grounds of the British Embassy itself!

The authority already quoted says with reference to these scavengers:

They are the real corps of dustmen in Madrid. Without their help the streets of our city—the capital of a

European State, would very soon be manure heaps. Something more or less the same may be said about the majority of public services, especially those which relate to matters of health; this explains the African death-rate of the city.

The above is not an isolated opinion, but the considered judgment of many well-informed persons, not to mention the ordinary man-in-the-street, who holds strong views on the subject. In 1921 Señor Garcia Cortés, in a lecture delivered at the Madrid Athenæum, dealt with the subject in very strong language, and added that:

The suburbs outside the original boundaries contain a population of 100,000, which increases daily. *Yet they have not a single yard of sewer.* For this disgraceful state of Madrid all are responsible, first the municipality, then the national Government and the inhabitants: in order to carry out the works required, it is necessary for the inhabitants of the city to think a little about these municipal problems which affect them so much, and to realise that they are living in a European city.

The following is a statement published by an educated Spaniard on the conditions prevalent in Madrid:

The inhabitants—save themselves those who can—are dirty, filthy, and in order to avoid offending my fellow-citizens, I do not say piggish. From windows and balconies they shake mats, carpets, bed-clothes sometimes of persons ill with typhoid, consumption, measles or scarlet fever. They throw microbes and filth on open or badly-covered baskets of bread and trays of cakes and pastries. Through shops and main doors on the ground floor, and from balconies on the upper stories, there are

thrown into the street: remains of meals, superfluous hair from the toilet operations of "ladies" and their offspring, and fruit peel of all kinds. . . . Much sweeping is required, and for it we need not only brooms, but better training of the inhabitants, schools for the thousands of children who are without them, and constant supervision; also fines from which one does not escape through influence. (Don ROBERTO CASTROVIDO, in *La Voz*, of Madrid.)

The quotations and extracts which I have given from articles by well-known writers in Madrid newspapers of the highest standing, give only a pallid idea of the facts, as they could be vouched for by any one who has lived in the Spanish capital during the last three or four years. I could give many more extracts to the same effect. The neglect of sanitation is nothing new. But so much has been heard in the English Press about the "improvements" which have been effected in the streets and the buildings of Madrid that an uninformed reader might easily derive quite wrong impressions. As has been admitted in these pages, much progress has, indeed, been made in building tenement houses and in repaving some of the central and "show" streets. On the other hand, *nothing whatever* has been done to improve the sanitary conditions of Madrid, and it may with truth be asserted that only the extraordinarily healthy surroundings of the city have enabled it to escape still worse epidemics than those which have passed through it. Even so, its death-rate is a standing record to the incapacity or indifference of the authorities, both municipal and national, to matters gravely

affecting the health of the population. The death-rate in Madrid per 1,000 of population during the five-year period, 1911–1915, varied from 23·4 in 1911 to 26·2 in 1914, with a mean for the whole period of 24·8 per 1,000. In the following quinquennial period the fluctuations were between 24·2 in 1917 and 29·2 in 1918, with a mean of 26·7 per mil, that is to say, almost 2 per mil more than in the preceding period, although during the same years the mortality of almost all the other European capitals was constantly decreasing. During 1921 the death rate dropped to 22·39 per mil (*La Voz*, of 2nd January, 1922), which may be compared with 12·6 for London. Of the 16,118 deaths, no fewer than 3,098 were of children under one year old, and 1,919 more were of children from one to four years of age. Two zones in the older part of the city registered the highest rates of mortality, being La Inclusa with 36·61 per mil, and El Hospital with 29·94 per mil. Several other districts had a rate exceeding 24 per mil.

Before Madrid can claim to be considered on a par with other European capitals, the city must carry out at enormous and ever-growing expense, *immense* sanitation works, both of sewerage and cleansing. The work required may be judged to some extent from the fact that in Madrid at the end of 1921 there was not a single rubbish destructor, against 800 in seventy English cities alone. Symptomatic of the city's attitude towards all kinds of public cleansing services is the fact that in all Madrid, with its boasted population of close on one million souls, there is not a single Turkish bath establishment, nor one place

where a decent man can have either a swimming bath or (much more needful still, in view of the scarcity of bathrooms in dwelling-houses) public facilities for an ordinary hip bath. The great social clubs are magnificently equipped in this respect for the benefit of their members. There is no provision whatever for the needs of the mass of the population. The people are too ignorant (as I have shown in the last chapter), and too indifferent either to health or comfort to will otherwise.

CHAPTER IV

POLITICS AND PEOPLE

Cada uno es como Dios le hizo, y aun peor muchas veces. CERVANTES.

(Every one is as God made him—and frequently much worse.)

§ 1. PARTIES, CHURCH AND ARMY

Quien hace por comun
Hace por ningun.
SPANISH PROVERB.

(He who works for the public works for nobody.)

HUMAN nature is so defective, and human egoism so strong and exclusive, that organised life cannot exist without some kind of authority which restrains individual impulse and enforces limitations in benefit of the community in general. Anarchy in its pure sense, or the absence of all government, would only mean a reversion to the conditions of life of our earliest ancestors, the cave-dwellers. Even that statement needs qualification, for it must be assumed that the strongest individual with the heaviest stone club asserted a real authority over his family and his weaker neighbours. In all ages each community of human beings has been ruled by some means. The necessity for some form of authority is also recognised in the innumerable and diversified religions which man has found indispensable. Pagan creeds

have a supreme god surrounded by subordinate deities. Such is the unruly nature of man, however, that he has never willingly submitted to control, but rebels against it, at least in spirit, and has looked upon the most benign rulers often with feelings of enmity and suspicion, jealous of their inevitable privileges, and doubting their sincerity. With the complications introduced into communal life by the growth of civilisation and the enormous increase of population, the art of government has become more complex and its problems more intricate and apparently insoluble; their consideration requires so much study and attention, that as a general rule only those persons who devote much time to that study are able to suggest the best ways of dealing with each matter in turn as it becomes urgent. Still fewer persons are able to foresee the problems and devise measures, either for preventing their full development or for coping with them when they may no longer be neglected with safety. This has gradually led to the creation of a class contemptuously referred to by their fellow-citizens as "professional politicians," that is to say, men who not only give up all their working hours to the study of problems of government, but who seek real and tangible profit for themselves from the work which they are supposed to do in the interest of the community as a whole. It is becoming increasingly difficult, in view of what occurs daily in all countries, to convince anybody that a politician is, or in the nature of things can be, actuated by any kind of altruistic motives.

If that is the general feeling of the public in even

the best governed countries, no surprise can be felt at finding it universally held in Spain. There, the control of public affairs has for long been in the hands of men whose work shows them entirely indifferent to the real interests of the nation, and completely absorbed in maintaining privileges for themselves and their class. In no other civilised country are politicians, as such, so despised, condemned and hated; the average Spaniard always seems to wish to expectorate whenever he mentions them. For this reason political activities are eschewed by the vast majority of Spaniards. This fact may be appreciated by observing the very small percentage of voters at any election, and from general conversation. It does not mean that Spaniards are indifferent to what is done by their politicians and rulers—far from it. In perhaps no other country are politics more *discussed* by the ordinary citizen than they are in Spain, although it is somewhat euphemistic to give the name of discussion to the violent diatribes and denunciations which one may hear wherever men gather together.

Nevertheless, developments have taken place in Spain which are similar to those found in other lands. The two traditional parties of the Ins and Outs (in Spain, Conservatives and Liberals) found themselves challenged, and their tranquil enjoyment of the fruits of authority roughly threatened, by the emergence of a Republican Party, owing its existence to the awakening of nations after the French Revolution. For a brief period it seemed that the new party would do all that the oppressed classes had expected of it.

But some of the leaders fell from the high standard of conduct which must be observed by all who seek the continued support of the populace; and the ever watchful and still powerful forces of reaction regained their sway. It was not to be expected, however, that the people would abandon their aspirations for better and impartial government. Having lost faith in its temporary idols who belonged, in the main, to the same classes of society as did their despotic predecessors, it resolved to work out its own salvation through men of its own class who were as yet untainted by close contact with the unjust, and who, being themselves sufferers, might be relied on to remain faithful to its cause. In this way the Socialist Party came into being. Its leaders rejected all collaboration with the discredited Republicans, amongst whom there were too many *bourgeois* whose ideals of government (as regarded the genuine working classes) too greatly resembled those of the Monarchists, whom they professed to combat. The new party at first included many who held Communist principles; but its leaders were men of greater breadth of vision, and preferred to conduct the party on constitutional lines, at least, until circumstances would convince them that it was impossible to effect deep and far-reaching reforms by peaceful methods.

The Republican Party has weakened, and whilst many of its working-class elements have moved with their fellows, its more educated or more highly placed units have become Liberal Monarchists, apparently despairing of shaking by constitutional methods the ever-tightening grip which the extreme and ultra-

montane Conservatives have kept on the sources of power. The late Liberal Government obtained office very unexpectedly, as its leaders each led a faction composed of personal adherents and quarrelled with each other as only brothers can. Even a working agreement between them, with the object of regaining the reins of government, did not appear probable until the mistakes of their Conservative opponents and predecessors gave them the long-hoped for opportunity.

Although some of the Liberal leaders in Spain are free from the blighting ecclesiastical influence which shackle their Conservative opponents (and make the latter's terms of office so many stages on the road to a final explosion, the time and effects of which no man can at present foresee) some of them are too wealthy to accept a complete programme of reforms, which must include a drastic re-arrangement of the country's system of taxation. It is not to be expected, therefore, that either a Liberal or Conservative Cabinet will initiate measures at all likely to satisfy the Labour Party; they might probably introduce Bills tending in that direction. Only a bold man, or one very ignorant of Spanish methods and habits, would venture to assert that any of such measures which reached the Statute Book would therefore be really and effectively enforced. To attempt to do so would bring a Liberal Government into a state of actual hostility towards its Conservative opponents, whose unbending attitude towards the Labour Party's programme would lead it to put all its influence behind those who would be affected adversely by the

law, and who would wish to oppose it. Such a clash between the two Monarchical parties might offer a golden opportunity to their mutual enemy, the Labour Party, to seize power by forcible means whilst its more numerous opponents were fighting a private duel.

Such a contingency is scarcely possible, however, and it is much more probable that the younger men now coming to the front in Spain will abandon their present sterile method of agitation in the Press and propaganda by lectures only, and will gradually grasp the reins ready to fall from the worn-out and almost lifeless hands of the hitherto customary leaders, in an attempt to save the existing constitutional monarchy from the fate with which it is now threatened as much by the forces of extreme reaction as by its natural enemies at the other end of the political scale. If that happens (and there seems to be nothing else that can save Spain from anarchy in the long run) it is certain that some of those young men will have enough Liberalism to throw off the fetters of caste and to join the Labour Party, thus bringing to it an intellectual contribution, which it needs in spite of the quite exceptional promise shown by some of its present members. This would also give it a contact with and an introduction to the middle classes, who now look on it with suspicious eyes and a prejudiced mind. Spanish Communism is unlikely to make many new converts. Up to the end of 1920 it was uncertain whether the extremists would capture the whole Spanish Labour Party or not. The old and greatly esteemed leader, Señor Pablo Iglesias, used

all his influence on the side of the moderates, and when Señor Fernando de los Rios, one of the latter's shining lights and a very capable lawyer, on his return from a journey of inquiry to Moscow, accompanied by a representative of the extremist section, presented his report about Russia to a Labour congress in Madrid, it was accepted by a large majority of votes. The Communists then left the Labour Party.

That eminent statesman, Señor Antonio Maura, was the last leader of the Conservative Party in Spain who had enough prestige and influence to enable the Party to show a united front to its adversaries. But he was too old, as age is reckoned in Spain, when he accepted the Premiership for the last time, to have any hope of doing more than gain time, and delay a little longer the process of dissolution within the Party, which appears likely to split into as many factions as those of its traditional opponents, the Liberals. The extreme gravity of the situation created by the restlessness and arrogance of certain military elements enabled Señor Sanchez Guerra to continue the fiction of Conservative union a few months longer ; it is probable that the Party will have to spend some time in the wilderness, and undergo a complete re-organisation of both men and programme before it can hold effective power again. Meanwhile, its very existence is threatened by the formation of a new party, which has taken as its model the *Partito Popolare* in Italy, but adapted to the special circumstances of Spain. This new party is called the Christian Democrat Party, and its chief civilian

creator and propagandist is Señor Ossorio y Gallardo, a prominent follower of Señor Antonio Maura.

Nothing is more noteworthy and significant in the Spanish political situation than the recrudescence of activity amongst the elements always known to be closely in touch with the national Church and with the Vatican. The Roman Catholic Church in Spain has always been distinguished by the intimate contact which it maintains with current events and politicians, the prescience which it shows regarding the probable trend of affairs, and the ease with which it trims its sails to any new winds, and uses them for its own advancement and security. It has always acted on the theory of the indivisibility of religion and politics, and as each of its branches is served in the majority of cases by good intellects amongst churchmen and politicians, it has frequently succeeded in anticipating events and postponing what must inevitably happen some day.

Thus it is that we find the Church in Spain using every means and all its influence to create Catholic trades unions, which not only allow it to persuade the religiously minded working man (and especially the agricultural labourer, who is far less able to judge for himself, being mostly illiterate and beyond the reach of ordinary political or social propaganda) that his aspirations have the Church's sympathy and support. These Catholic unions lessen the power and prestige of the secular unions formed under the auspices and with the help of the Labour Party, by reducing their membership and tending to give them a majority of extremists who discredit them in the eyes of peaceful

and law-abiding citizens. The Church trades unions are popularly dubbed "Yellow" unions in contrast to the "Red" organisations of the Socialists and Labour Party in general. There have been almost pitched battles between "Yellows" and "Reds" in industrial disputes; furthermore, charges have been made that the "Yellow" unionists are frequently employed as strike breakers. Whatever degree of truth there may be in that assertion, it is indisputable that the whole official and private influence of the Church is exerted against the ordinary activities of secular trades unions. A natural outcome and consequence of this clerical intervention in Labour matters was the organisation of the Christian Democratic Party, regarding which the newspaper *A.B.C.*, of 17th November, 1921, wrote:

This group, which has recently received from the Papal Nuncio encouragement to develop its action, is now in full activity. At its recent meeting it was decided to found a weekly review, to be entitled *Christian Democracy*, which will be edited by writers who are members of the group, and by celebrated thinkers who are in sympathy with its social aims.

According to *Tiempo*, of 12th April, 1921, the Christian Democrat Association or group was founded by—

Thirty Spanish Catholic writers who, according to calculations made by one of them, have together written on social matters, enough to form a library of 500 volumes.

Señor Ossorio y Gallardo, leader of those Christian Democrats, in a lecture given at Seville on 14th

February, 1921, divided politicians as follows: (1) Those possessed of a devil who try to destroy their country; the dynamiters and assassins; those who impose an eight hours' day, and then work six hours or less; the usurers and the new-rich. (2) Fatalists; men who pull a long face and shrug their shoulders when revolution is mentioned, because they say that a revolution is inevitable. (3) The easy-going, who maintain that all is well and there is no need to do anything. (4) Bloodthirsty men who would apply the law of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, and would kill three terrorists for every policeman murdered, and who have lost all respect for the law. (5) Last-ditchers who defend ideals; such are the Carlists and Republicans. (6) Evolutionists, being those Socialists who reject the Third International, but organise groups and trades unions in opposition to the official ones. (7) Home Rulers; those who love their native province and wish to get rid of the Central Government, which has done them so much harm. Finally, the men of good will, who see the danger of inertia and do not know how to provide against it. Señor Ossorio did not say, apparently, to which group, if any, he himself belonged; but he has given us a useful classification of Spanish politicians. In another lecture, delivered in Madrid on 14th March, 1921, the same gentleman is reported to have said:

Misgovernment is traditional in Spain, and the responsibility for it falls on the middle classes, who have seized the reins of government since aristocracy deserted the post. Amongst all their errors and forgetfulness they

have conferred one great benefit on us; for a whole century we have been struggling for liberty, and this feeling is so rooted in us that it will render impossible any attempt to translate the Russian revolution into Spanish.

He declared himself in favour of profit-sharing and of the participation of Labour in the task of Government.

These quotations suffice to show that even Conservatives are being taught to realise that matters have reached a pitch when it is necessary to cease turning a deaf ear to the people's grievances. Every effort is made to save the Monarchy, without which and its attendant privileged classes many Spaniards believe that their country could not exist. The *Mundo*, of 22nd January, 1921, in an article on the King's birthday next day, said:

. . . With kings and through kings we were great and powerful. A sad trial of a republic, as brief as twilight, proved with the eloquence of facts that Spain does not wish to be governed otherwise than in her great days, when she achieved her unity and discovered a new world through a queen's initiative. Through the firm will of her sovereigns she dominated Europe, and was mistress of the world's destiny in both hemispheres. . . . So great is the love professed by Spain for monarchical institutions, that even the republics born of her flesh, her old American colonies, who have become powerful and flourishing nations, love and pay reverence to the King of Spain, and are only anxious for an opportunity to prove their affection for him. They offer him a triumphal journey across the New Continent; a journey which will be one of the greatest tokens of approval

which the monarchical form of Government can find in the whole world. Nobody can doubt that this is so.

That the dissensions in the Liberal Party have done it immense injury is undeniable, as may be seen in the following extract from an article by Señor Manuel Bueno in the *Heraldo*, of 2nd April, 1921, in which that gentleman refers to a recent arrest of certain Communists, and suggests that a conspiracy was afoot to cause Communist risings throughout Spain. Señor Bueno asks :

> Is it suggested that we are not, as the foreseeing and illustrious ex-Minister, Señor Ossorio y Gallardo, lately declared that we were, at a time when the principles of authority, liberty and property are all in crisis ? Is the Liberal Party capable of undertaking honestly the revision and reform of these fundamental precepts of law ? Can any one who knows the survivors of our historical Liberalism—an empty political shell—believe that they are capable of re-establishing with their formulas of Government the social peace which is so deeply disturbed to-day ?

It was difficult for any one with the slightest knowledge of the intricacies of Spanish politics and the personal character of Spanish party leaders to feel any confidence in the stability and duration of the late Government. A continuance of Conservative and reactionary rule being certain to lead at no distant date to a renewal of all kind of disorder, and Conservative Ministers being entirely discredited by the failure of the Moroccan campaign, and by their complete inability to control the underground forces which they themselves had encouraged within the

Army, nothing less than a period of really Liberal Government could give the country a breathing space in which to face the facts of the situation and make a last effort to avoid anarchy and destruction. The fact is, that many of the Liberals are at heart just as contemptuous of the working classes and just as convinced of their own superiority as are the Tories themselves. They are ready to pay lip-service to the aspirations of the toilers, because without the latter they could not hope, as politics are organised in Spain to-day, to hold office for a month, for they have little or no influence in either the Army or the Church, which are the only organised bodies on which the existing form of Government depends. Despised and attacked by the extreme reactionaries because they at least prevent the latter from enjoying uninterruptedly the sweets and advantages of office, they are equally hated by the Labour extremists, who accuse them of hypocrisy, and of adopting exactly the same methods in order to obtain and retain power as those which they profess publicly to condemn in their Conservative opponents. Another cause of the weakness of their hold on both the middle and lower classes is the fact that the personal character of some of the Liberal leaders will not stand very close investigation. It is as true in Spain as in our own country that the masses will not support and follow leaders who, however plausible their public promises and declarations, do not inspire confidence by their actions in private life. I do not pretend that there are no righteous men amongst them. It is an unfortunate fact that such men are the least influential, politically

speaking; and the whole system of politics is so rotten in Spain that only a man willing to adopt the current methods of securing electoral support can hope to have parliamentary following worth the name, and numerous enough to influence legislation.

For these reasons there can be no collaboration in Spain between Liberals of the old school and genuine reformers. The latter are also handicapped by the idea, widely held amongst the almost inert middle classes, that any departure from established policy and methods would only open a door to Anarchists and Communists, whose sole desire is to destroy completely the existing organisation of society, in the destruction of which the middle classes themselves would be entirely obliterated. No human instinct is greater than that of self-preservation. The vast majority of Spaniards prefer to endure the evils from which they already suffer, and the extent of which they know, rather than to risk the development of others, which their imagination pictures as exceeding in badness all that they have already experienced.

One of the chief dangers of this middle class hesitation and suspicion is the encouragement which it affords to the reactionaries, who are determined to retain their present privileges and advantages as long as possible. In the welter of contradictory currents and tendencies in Spanish politics to-day, with a cloud of communistic revolution hanging over the life of the nation, there is discernible a tendency on the part of reaction to profit by the divisions amongst its opponents; indeed, it has already effected a bold *coup* by the military element, by which it hopes to

maintain itself in power for another generation. The whole strength of the reactionaries is based on existing institutions, of which the fall would mean the advent to power of the forces of progress now struggling for such an opening; but there is nothing in the eyes of those reactionaries to object to in a reconstitution of those same institutions on a different basis. Whilst Republicans and Socialists desire the abolition of the monarchy, because in their eyes it represents their own subjection and the maintenance of unjust government, the extreme Conservatives, and clericals and militarists, are just as anxious to reconstruct it on a more despotic basis. They will not hesitate even to depose the present Sovereign in order to set in his place a personage (who might be his son, still under age) over whom they can hope to exercise greater influence than is theirs at present. The people who think that the best way to counter working class agitation is to crush it at its source, and who are quite ready to use again to-day the same kind of violence which led to the sacking of Liege and Antwerp by the Spaniards in the Middle Ages, are only too numerous and powerful. The introduction into Spain of compulsory military service has already made a great change in the character of the Army, which can no longer be thoroughly relied upon to act as the blind instrument of any form of oppression; since even military discipline will not always make men fire on their fathers and brothers who only demand to be treated as free human beings, and to have the most elementary rights of citizens in modern times. The famous *Juntas* of officers, formed nearly

six years ago to secure improvements in Army administration, and hailed as providential by the reactionary Ministers then in office, have proved to be thorns in the flesh of their Conservative patrons. The Moroccan disaster, which laid bare so much and such unforgivable neglect on the part of successive War Ministers, in both Liberal and Conservative Ministries, only served to confirm the determination of those *Juntas* to act as guardians af the Army's interests, whatever party might be in power.

The predominance of the influence of any military element can never be favourable to civil liberty; and the influence more or less openly exercised by the *Juntas* in political matters is a grave menace in a country where military *pronunciamientos* have been common enough. Even those who blessed the *Juntas* at their commencement tried afterwards to destroy their prestige and influence. Spanish reformers naturally look askance at the actions of such unconconstitutional and illegal bodies. A conflict between the *Juntas* and the Cabinet caused a decree to be prepared in January, 1922, for the purpose of bringing those committees, which nobody dared to try to abolish altogether, under some kind of control by the Ministry of War. It was said that King Alfonso refused to sign the decree. The Prime Minister thereupon tendered to the King the resignation of the whole Cabinet, and for a day or two the utmost excitement reigned in Madrid; even the dynasty was in danger. This fact made even hot-blooded Spaniards hesitate, because no man could foretell where disorder would stop if once unchained. Ulti-

mately the *Juntas* made a nominal submission to the Cabinet, and the latter remained in office. The whole situation was peculiar, because the vast majority of Spaniards objected to Army interference in politics, and hated the *Juntas:* but they hated, at least as much, the arbitrary and reactionary Ministers who posed on that occasion as the defenders of civic freedom against military power.

§ 2. Candidates, "Graft" and Electorate

Remuda de pasturaje
Hace bicerros gordos.
Spanish Proverb.

(By change of pasture goats get fat.)

Englishmen who have not previously travelled much, nor made a special study of the political education of the people in other countries than their own, find it exceedingly difficult to understand the state of things in Spain when duty or pleasure calls them to that country. They find themselves in a social and political atmosphere which forms the antipodes to everything to which they have been accustomed. Their first feeling is one of bewilderment, like that of a man, recovering consciousness after temporary oblivion through accident which has caused his removal to strange surroundings, who sits up rubbing his eyes and trying to gather together the threads of his thoughts, whilst not quite sure whether he is really awake or still in the land of dreams. The community around them is one in which habits of political thought, and of which the instinctive impulses and reactions, are as different from their own as it is possible to

conceive them. At every turn and under all circumstances visitors are puzzled by the existence of problems and difficulties which were solved and overcome in their own country long before they themselves were born, and which they never imagined could still be very real and frequently recurring factors in the life of any European nation in the twentieth century. In a general way they have realised beforehand that things in Spain are different from those which occupy our thoughts at home. Any ideas, which they may have had about that almost incomprehensible country, have probably been tinged and flavoured by some of the grosser manifestations of its habits and customs as illustrated on the music hall stage in these days when Spain is, so to speak, the current fashion in several of the great cities of the world; or by their remembrance of Spanish thought and manners as depicted in some half-forgotten novel, of which the author may never have visited the scenes which he attempts to describe.

As in other countries, municipal elections in Spain arouse even less interest than those for parliamentary representation; no means have yet been found to induce the ordinary Spaniard to trouble himself about them. He could not in any case, as matters stand, make an altruistic choice between two conflicting policies of social administration; for the simple reason that such policies do not exist. Candidates make no attempt to formulate any programme, but offer themselves for election purely as adherents of such and such a political party or prominent personage. Public meetings are of rare occurrence

since there is no audience for them. It might be added with entire truth that the candidates would have nothing to say to an audience if one could be found, since those councillors offering themselves for re-election have little or nothing to say to their constituents, and the men who are candidates for the first time prefer not to show their ignorance of the duties which, if elected, they will have to perform.

This happens in the case of the candidates and future councillors in Madrid, the capital. It will therefore be understood that the public, from whom they come, and for whose suffrages they ask, is if possible, more ignorant of the real nature of the work incumbent on them. It is one of the strongest characteristics of Spaniards in general, but especially in the central and southern portions of the country, to make the least possible effort and to trust to "Government" or the "Authorities" to do everything required. This is more particularly true as regards the slight physical effort required to attend a polling booth for the purpose of voting; but it is also applicable to the mental effort required to realise the nature of the problems to be solved and the best way to solve them. To get at the real cause of this inertia one must remember what is said elsewhere in this book about the state of education in Spain. Untrained minds cannot be expected to form good judgment on even comparatively minor problems which would not exist as such in a more highly cultured community. To such minds the simplest matters assume an importance which seems almost ludicrous to well-read persons. It is not by any means unfair

to the Spaniards to state that the degree of education possessed by the adult middle-class inhabitants is considerably less than that of the average manual worker in Britain. Deep or continuous thought cannot be expected of utterly untrained intellects, and so most of the people whose culture would fit them for tackling municipal problems belong to the aristocratic and leisured classes. In Spain these carry to extremes the apathy and indifference to public work which are characteristic of such classes everywhere.

The average Spanish citizen, schooled by experience, is convinced that the man who seeks public office of any kind has some personal end to serve. "Graft" and "axe grinding" are more firmly embedded in Spanish customs than in those of any other country professing Western civilisation. Although there are a few individuals whose words and actions are based entirely on principles and unbiased by personal considerations, it is asserted by Spaniards themselves, even more openly and emphatically than by their foreign friends or critics, that nothing of importance can be done in Spain without a considerable expenditure of money, of which the details never figure in the balance sheet of an undertaking. *Bribery is carried into every branch of political activity*, and is so widespread and general that the public has no faith in the professed altruism of any of its leaders. This universal public sentiment is sufficient justification for the statement that all men in Spain have their price, "from the Prime Minister to the lowest messenger," as a Spaniard put it to me. It is true that other countries are not immaculate in this respect. In

most of them the thing is done, if at all, in a private and cautious manner. In few is it spoken of openly, as it is in Spain, as a perfectly inevitable form of tribute. That there are honest politicians and councillors in that country, nobody with any personal acquaintance with the facts will deny; they are the few shining exceptions. Is it surprising that the ordinary honest man will have nothing to do with public affairs of any kind if he can possibly avoid it?

"Land owners," Señor Ossorio asserts, "are more interested in securing political predominance at elections than in contributing to the aggrandisement of the country," and they "do not trouble themselves about anything." With venial representatives, whose votes can be bought for cash or secured by means of a mere threat to withdraw electoral support, it is evident that the land owners' task is easy, and that they run little risk of the passing of legislation which would compel them to contribute their fair share towards the expense of administrating and developing their country. One of the chief hindrances to the progress of Spain is the paucity of means of communication between its component parts; and if the evil effects of this are deeply felt and only too visible in political matters, they are still more evident as regards the relations between landlord and tenant in the country districts. Many of the great estates are so isolated from the centres of national life that their owners are almost as immune from outside interference as were the robber barons of the Middle Ages. The slowness of Spanish legal proceedings, combined with the veniality of many of the officials charged with the

administration of justice, leaves tenants on such estates without legal redress for their grievances. That the latter exist and are of a serious nature is sufficiently proved by the unrest of recent years amongst the agricultural inhabitants of some of Spain's fairest provinces, an unrest which has made itself felt through disturbances of a sporadic nature up to the present, but disquieting enough to cause many thoughtful Spaniards to fear a peasants' revolution. Indeed, many think this is much more probable than any attempt at the same remedy by the artisan Communists.

After making every possible allowance for the extremely rare exceptions which may occasionally be found, it may be asserted without exaggeration that the Spanish landowning classes, especially in the case of families who have held the land for generations, are entirely indifferent to the well-being of their tenants. They do nothing to improve the standard of living, or otherwise to increase the simple comforts of those who provide them with the money which they spend on show and luxury in the big cities. They have very serious objections to the presence in Congress of deputies elected on a platform of rural reforms, or who might adopt and patronise such a subject if their constituency were sufficiently mixed in character for any votes at all to be influenced by the grievances of the peasants and farmers. Señor Ossorio y Gallardo is therefore right in stating that the landed proprietors of Spain take an interest in political matters. The increasing possibility of an attack being made on their privileged position (as

regards taxation of the source of their wealth) has awakened them to the danger of helping by their inaction the forces which make for the equalisation of the burdens now borne almost entirely by the urban communities. The development of industry in Spain has not yet reached the stage when the titled nobility of the country is very much interested in it. Commercialism has not yet permeated the Spanish aristocracy, as it has that of other more industrial countries, in which the presence of a nobleman on the board of directors of a large undertaking serves to attract the savings of humbler people. Spanish aristocrats still look askance at being mixed up in such enterprises. They still consider manufacturers and merchants as beings on a lower plane than theirs, and unworthy of being met on terms of equality. There are a few exceptions, and that some of the best-known *Hidalgos* have made large fortunes in various commercial undertakings, cannot be denied; but such men lose caste amongst their fellows through their pluto-aristocratic tendencies, and there is no rush to follow their example. Perhaps they would be more widely imitated already, as they must inevitably be in a more or less near future, were it not that they have not been content to acquire the legitimate influence which prominence in industry or commerce would give them. Of late they have combined their trading ventures with political wire-pulling, using either one or the other of those props as a means to increase their power in the other direction with purely selfish motives; and without any consideration for the general welfare.

In all matters affecting their interests as land-owners, even such men as those just mentioned take their stand with the others of their class, although it may sometimes suit the prominent politicians in their ranks to pay lip-service in Congress to the principles enunciated by those who would make a complete revolution in the fiscal system and financial administration of their country. This attitude hinders reform instead of hastening it. It also increases the danger that the peasant class will refuse any longer to be guided by those who profess to have its interests at heart. Losing patience, it may be driven to adopt revolutionary methods, which threaten to be completely effective as far as regards the removal of the opponents of reform. They are not less likely to lead to the ruin and destruction of the victims of the present state of affairs. Even the more prominent so-called democratic leaders are themselves owners of large estates, and therefore strive in all they do to avoid any measures which would detrimentally affect their own interests. One or two of those leaders who are so far from possessing large estates, that they may be said to live by their political wits, might go far enough in the required direction; but their very impecuniosity has caused them to be looked upon with suspicion, and rejected as leaders, by the Spanish masses who, as I already said, believe that there is no altruism in public men, but that all of them have axes to grind. The situation cannot possibly be saved through any such agency as that of the proposed Popular Party, or Christian Democratic Party, nor by any of the old parties, nor by the Army leaders,

whose interests are those of land owners. One must look for improvement from the people themselves. And the people are quite apathetic.

§ 3. Political Thought and Methods

Quien á buen arbol se arrima,
Buena sombra le cobija.
Spanish Proverb.

(He who leans against a good tree enjoys good shade.)

All the evidence shows that both Spain and the Hispano-American Republics are afflicted with a double and curiously contrasting manifestation of the evils of too much and too little politics. In each country there is on the one side a comparatively small number of what may with justice be called "professional" politicians, and on the other side a large majority of persons holding the right to vote, but exercising that right very rarely, or not at all. The questions which dominate politics are *not matters of principle*, but *personal preferences* for such and such an individual, who may be all that is commendable as a man, both in public and private life, but who has no fixed political programme of measures which he hopes to see approved by the Legislature. Outside the Socialist Party the other so-called parties in Spain are floundering in a slough of inaction and bewilderment; they consist in almost every case of purely personal adherents of one or another of the men thrown to the top of the political cauldron as much by the force of circumstances as through any merit or effort of their own; the principal banner of these men is their own name. Their chief mottoes are *vae*

victis and *the spoils to the conqueror!* The pretended democracy of to-day insists on the due observance of, at least, a form of voting in which victory is obtained by a majority of votes. It is no longer the fashion for a would-be dictator to order the removal of the symbols of authority, and to seize the power himself with the help of armed mercenaries, although even this has recently happened in Spain, as the chapter dealing with the Military Directorate will show. The would-be Spanish ruler surrounds himself with a certain number of more or less influential men whose adherence he has secured by the promise of a share in the spoils of victory. From these lesser fry radiates a ramification of subordinates in varying degree; in these toils are caught the few genuine and unsophisticated voters—like flies in a spider's web.

The natural consequence of this state of affairs in a country like Spain, where it is officially admitted that more than one-half of the population can neither read nor write, is that each subordinate ring of the web, or link in the chain, expects to receive its share of the plunder resulting from the victory of its respective patron or candidate. The nearer the link to the clasp of the chain the greater are the benefits expected from the success of the conspiracy. Nepotism is one of the worst evils from which the administration of any country can suffer. It invariably means that unqualified and quite incompetent persons are put into the most remunerative posts, or those, the possession of which carries with it the greatest social prestige or political influence. It is a system or

practice which can be and is carried out under both the most autocratic and the most democratic forms of government, and it is by no means unknown in Great Britain. But with us it has not yet reached the high stage of development which it has attained in Spain. In that unhappy country it is so generally and ingeniously practised that it might almost be called one of the fine arts. The Spanish public, realising its own impotence in this, as in other matters of politics, has accepted it openly, whilst denouncing it fiercely in private. Even though this nepotism may not be carried to its logical conclusion, and special circumstances may render inadvisable any application of it in a direct manner, a prominent politician has no difficulty in finding some other way of favouring his near relatives without incurring too much opprobium. Señor Lorenzo refers to this fact with true Spanish tact and delicacy when he says :

The Minister of Education has gone to Burgos, where he was received with a *Te Deum*, a procession, and other signs of public rejoicing, just as if it were 200 years ago ; and just as it will be in 2,000 years. Why does Burgos show such joy ? . . . Because the Minister is a native of that city, and the city will profit in some way, says Burgos to itself. Sometimes, indeed, cities gain by having a son as Minister, by the provision of a school-house without master or endowment, a bridge which improves the property of some personage, a road leading to the same property, a present from public funds, etc. All this on condition that the register is kept at the disposal of the Minister, and that a statue is erected of him. (Señor Felix Lorenzo, a well-known journalist, in *La Voz*, of 24th May, 1921.)

Even though a son may not have any pecuniary benefit from the exercise of his father's political influence and generosity with national funds, he himself may derive vastly increased local prestige and influence through the granting to his native city, or the place of his residence, of permission and sufficient funds for some long-required public works, which would have remained unexecuted very much longer, save for the happy chance that the gentleman's father had at last attained the rewards of his services to some still greater orb in the political firmament, and been given a seat in the Cabinet. By such an act the newly-fledged Minister kills two birds with one stone ; he increases his own perhaps exiguous following in the city concerned, and tightens the bonds which retain within his own sphere the influence and votes controlled by some local personage whose interests are specially favoured by such works as those mentioned.

Although the better education of the masses cannot be counted among the aspirations of the majority of prominent Spanish politicians, even the latter cannot avoid altogether the cumulative effect of modern tendencies in that direction. Many would not under any circumstances dare to oppose it openly. Such politicians do not refuse to allow their indirect gift to take the form of a school-house, as Señor Lorenzo suggests, when that is demanded. They generally find comfort in the thought that the school managers will have great difficulty in carrying it on successfully without sufficient funds. It goes without saying that these remarks about education apply mainly to the

leaders of the reactionary parties; those of the various Liberal factions are (if one must judge them in the only possible way, which is by their own inaction in the matter) indifferent as to whether education is made more extensive or not. They certainly would not oppose any scheme of extension. But it is the younger men who are the driving power of the many genuine Radicals to be found in Spain, who are now wholeheartedly and unanimously of opinion that one of the prime needs of their country to-day is the education of the masses.

One of the statements of deepest significance in Señor Lorenzo's remark is that relating to the reception of the Minister with a *Te Deum*. It would be a gross error to read it as indicating that the Spaniards are so religious a people that religious services and ceremonies must accompany every public act. The frequency of such performances is apt to lead Englishmen, and especially Protestants, to imagine that most Spaniards are still the religious fanatics they probably were in the days of the Armada. The significance of a *Te Deum* in the reception of a Minister of Education lies in the evidence thereby afforded of the interest which the Roman Catholic Church, which is, of course, the established Church of Spain, takes in matters relating to education; in this it gives an example which might be followed with advantage by its critics and opponents.

There are amongst the more advanced Radicals many men who claim to be free from the shackles of religion of any kind; one, at least, of their leaders who held ministerial rank is a professed Agnostic. It is,

however, natural that most public men in the country which is to-day the chief pillar of the Roman Catholic Church, should themselves profess belief in the creed of that Church. That does not, as indeed it need not, prevent some of them from holding the view that it is in the best interests of both education and religion that they should be taught separately. There are anti-denominationalists in favour of a purely unsectarian system of universal education. Unfortunately, for the success of the principles which they hold, their admiration for them is often merely platonic, and they do very little to propagate them or to prove their own convictions by determined and sustained effort to provide a sufficiency of undenominational schools. Under such circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the masses, always attracted, and, at any rate, temporarily held by any kind of ceremonious show, should attend the services provided for them by the priests; and by that attendance appear to give them their moral support.

It has been shown that the favours granted by a successful politician to the men who have helped him to attain a prominent position in public life may be superficially justified by the plea that they benefit a community as well as the individual, to whom or through whom they are granted. It is scarcely necessary to add that such favours are not the only ones given, nor those which arouse the deepest resentment in the public mind. What the man-in-the-street in Spain does resent bitterly and curse deeply (although fear of the consequences to himself if he acted otherwise leads him to do so in private rather than in public,

and under his breath rather than aloud) are the facility and frequency with which a Minister, senator, deputy or mere city councillor is able to find " cushy " jobs or sinecures for his friends or relatives. If social and political progress is slow in Spain, the chief reason for such an unsatisfactory state of things lies in the fact that far too many posts of responsibility and high importance in the national administration are filled by persons who owe their eminence to political favouritism of the kind mentioned. Many humbler men also occupy subordinate posts obtained by the same methods. The inordinate power possessed in Spain by every kind of official, uniformed or otherwise—a power directly due to the fact that the posts are obtained and held by influence and favouritism—makes of those subordinates a very important part of the deadweight which hampers and often prevents the forward march of the nation. The love of power and authority for their own sakes, and for the opportunities which their possession gives for arrogance towards less-favoured persons, is one of the chief characteristics and defects of the Spanish race to-day, just as it was in the days when Spain was the chief colonising power in the world. The structure of Spanish society is still of such a mediæval type, and class distinctions are still so openly recognised and rigidly enforced, that many would-be reformers grow tired of their self-imposed task undertaken out of pure altruism and love of country. In time they abandon the struggle, convinced that nothing short of physical force applied through the medium of a ruthless revolutionary movement, will ever effect a

breach in the walls of prejudice and tradition which surround and protect the vested interests of the privileged few who hold the destiny of Spain in their hands.

Señor Lorenzo, whose name I cite, is one of the most sincere and energetic advocates of political and social reforms in Spain. In the up-to-date evening newspaper of which he is an editor, he has published many interesting articles of a highly educative nature, which shows him to be free from the ordinary restrictions of Spanish conventionality of thought and expression. Yet even his optimism fails him when he comments on this one of the many peculiarities of Spanish political life. Whilst admitting that this system of political rewards and bribery is exactly the same to-day as it was 200 years ago in his country, he allowed his pessimism to overcome him and declare that similar scandals will be reported by the newspapers of 2,000 years hence. There is some reason for hoping that his despondent prediction will not come true. A new and improved administration will, no doubt, be installed under which the real interests of the community will be the only grounds on which national assistance may be granted or withheld. When that day comes—and it may be nearer at hand than many people imagine—the electoral register will have ceased to be the property of any individual, however highly placed and influential he may be. In order to receive the honour of commemoration by a statue in his native town a politician will have to do more useful work than that of obsequious attendance on another personage still more powerful than himself.

S.T.

§ 4. Law, Social Apathy, Bureaucracy, and "Young Spain"

Quien duerme bien,
No le pican las pulgas.
Spanish Proverb.
(A sound sleeper is not disturbed by fleas.)

One of the chief reproaches made against Spaniards by their Anglo-Saxon critics—and I speak now of persons who have taken the trouble to visit Spain and obtain at least a partial and cursory idea of conditions there—is that they allow the Moorish element in their blood to impose on them an almost Oriental fatalism which is averse to all effort; in other words, they are accused of being lazy and of doing nothing to rid their country of the many causes which hamper and hinder its progress. That there is some, even much truth in this accusation will not be denied by Spaniards themselves.

The average Englishman finds it more difficult to understand the helplessness of the Spanish citizen, inasmuch as his inquiries show him that many of the country's laws, and especially the legislation of the last twenty years, are of the most radical and advanced nature. Spanish law is, indeed, in many respects fit to serve as a model for the law makers of other and much more progressive countries. Alas! Spain is a land of paradox. There is a very wide and deep abyss between the manufacture of laws and their enforcement. Although education is not widespread in Spain, much of what is given is of good quality, and compares creditably with that imparted under those systems generously subsidised from public funds.

There is no lack of intellectual and clever men in Spain; but the country's chief handicap lies in the fact that its whole organisation tends to divert the ability of those men from useful channels instead of taking full advantage of it in the cause of progress. It is almost inevitable in a country where industrial and commercial opportunities have hitherto been few, that higher education should generally take the form of studying law; and that the possession of the degree of Doctor of Laws should be the main aspiration of a large majority of students, recognised by Government, civilian employers, and the public at large as a proof that the holder has acquired all the knowledge required for *any* position of trust and responsibility. The large number of young Spaniards who have earned that degree cannot possibly hope to make a living by the practice of law, either as solicitors or barristers, in spite of the litigious tendencies of the population, the innumerable occasions on which the intervention of lawyers is required for the endless legal formalities which attend the simplest acts of life, and the almost interminable nature of legal proceedings of any kind in Spain. On the other hand, the study of their law gives them an immense advantage over other citizens as politicians and administrators, since, in order to carry on those callings with success, they must be well versed in all the niceties which hamper their functions or enable them to derive the greatest possible profit from their practice. Whatever else may be said about Spanish politicians and legislators, ignorance is certainly not one of their defects; on the contrary, they suffer from an excess of *theoretical*

knowledge which the limited opportunities found in their own country have not allowed them to perfect and complete by a study of its working in practice. As the average young Spaniard has not had, until lately, the habit of travelling to investigate for himself the results obtained through the measures about which he has read in text-books and current magazines or other literature, his experience is usually *nil*. Nor can much more be said about his elders, who are in the main absolutely ignorant, save by what they have read of the actual conditions of life in other lands. When, therefore, after many delays and apparently endless discussions, the moment at last arrives when the force of circumstances compels a Spanish Cabinet Minister to draft a Bill dealing with some new aspect or development of national requirements, he finds many collaborators who are able to inform him regarding what has been done in similar circumstances by other lands. They are able to draw up a document which embraces the very last words of modern legislation in the most advanced countries on the matter in hand. As a general rule, and until quite recently, it was enough for a measure to be proposed by a member of the Government, to be quite sure that it would be approved and passed with a minimum of amendment or modification by a Congress which had been specifically elected for the sole purpose of supporting that particular Government. Times have changed somewhat of later years, and a greater number of Radical deputies have been elected who owe allegiance to none of the older leaders or shibboleths; at the same time the old parties are more

and more minutely subdivided, so that it is rare that any one faction holds a clear majority and can impose its will. All this, of course, is to the good. But even so, a complicated but otherwise immaculate and unimpeachable Bill, devised to deal with the latest popular grievance which can no longer be hidden or denied, passes into law after the usual eloquent speeches on and learned explanations of its cause and purpose. *It is then completely forgotten or ignored or wilfully broken, even by its authors and sponsors.* The complexity of human nature and the good effects of even very much curtailed public discussion are such that the passing of the Bill often brings, at any rate, temporary benefit to those on whose behalf it was intended to be introduced; the mere fact of its presentation to Congress often causes evil-doers and oppressors to hold their hands for a while, and seed is sown which cannot fail to fructify sooner or later.

The chief faults to be found in Spanish laws are the verbosity of their preambles and the unnecessary and unworkable minuteness of their provisions. Having been drafted by theorists void of all practice, and not infrequently of all actual personal knowledge of the problems which they have set themselves to solve, they fail through being too unpractical. They would be magnificent if made for a country which had far outstripped its rivals and almost reached the millennium. But they are quite useless and inappropriate for the Government of a nation which is hopelessly backward, even in comparison with others which are far from theoretical perfection; they could only be applied and properly administered in a

country, the people of which had reached the highest stage of culture. The disgracefully backward state of education discussed in another chapter shows that the Spaniards are very far from being such a people, even if there were not other evidence that Spain has still a long and dreary road to travel before her average citizen can understand such laws or the need for them. Very little intimate and confidential conversation in their own language with well-educated Spaniards of the middle classes will suffice to show the truth of that statement. They show a *naïveté* and simplicity in all their remarks on political matters which are likely to cause an Englishman to gasp with amazement unless he has a long and intimate knowledge of their country and their race. As an example of this, one finds that although the Spanish Constitution of 1876 is comparatively democratic in form, Spaniards have never learned to make proper use of their rights and privileges under it. The difficulties of organisation in a country where the means of communication between cities and districts are so defective, are increased a thousandfold by the apathetic character of the people themselves, which in its turn is due partly to racial characteristics, and partly to the moral and physical isolation to which Spain has voluntarily condemned herself for many generations past. Whilst almost all the other peoples of Europe have felt the influence of the great democratic movements of the eighteenth century, and have gradually changed their old *régimes* of autocracy into more or less popular systems of government, Spaniards alone have allowed the old abuses to remain intact

and failed to improve their lot by constitutional methods. Their geographical position and military weakness have caused or permitted them to remain outside all entangling alliances; and they have been able to count on fierce rivalry between the Great Powers as a shield against the ambitions of any one of the latter. For this reason they have not found it necessary during the last century to make any special effort or sacrifice to maintain their independence, and to continue in full enjoyment of ease and laziness in a country where Nature provides almost spontaneously all the necessaries of life.

The first rude shock to their nonchalance and their indifference to the affairs of the outside world was the Spanish-American War of 1898, which deprived them of most of their overseas dominions, and compelled them to realise at last that their isolation and out-of-date methods of administration were a very serious danger to their own independence. The effects of that struggle, as far as Spain was concerned, were of two very different kinds. The whole nation, outside the governing classes and officials, was aroused to a state of intense indignation at the revelation of the incapacity and criminal negligence of its rulers. At the same time the number of actual and potential bureaucrats in Spain was greatly increased by the return to the homeland of many functionaries, hitherto happy and contented in the facile exploitation of the peoples they had administered; and the openings for placing all would-be office holders and the *protégés* of prominent politicians were made considerably fewer. It is natural for Spaniards to express

their feelings with great vehemence; the loudness of their recriminations immediately after that war led some foreign observers to conclude that the nation was at length imbued with a new spirit of reform and the necessary determination to carry reform into effect without further delay. That these expectations were too optimistic was soon made evident. The nation failed to seize a golden opportunity for inaugurating an entirely new system of politics and administration more in harmony with modern ideas and requirements. The fire of its first rage was soon found to be, as usual, a mere flaming tow. It quickly died away, leaving behind it merely another layer of ashes to add to the depression caused by the uselessness and failure of many other similarly ephemeral conflagrations. Political leaders were not anxious to fan the flames and direct them towards the rotten structures which impeded progress. Their own positions were based on those impediments; they feared being left without any kind of support; they were not accustomed to rely on the people's will, but to treat it as of no account. For their own sakes, or at least so they imagined, they had rather to listen to the importunities of the greatly increased army of place-seekers out of employment, and as far as administrative matters were concerned things slipped back quickly into their old grooves. The reformers found that nothing short of revolution by physical force would enable them to effect the desired modifications. For that they were not prepared, even if they had the will; so officialdom, bureaucracy, and departmental indolence were again left triumphant.

It must not on that account be thought that the war served no good purpose in Spain, and that its causes and effects were soon forgotten. The eyes of the people had been opened for a brief space of time. This was enough to show it the immensity and imminence of its peril, and the urgent need for radical changes of thought and action if Spain were to continue free, and in the least degree worthy of its glorious past. Although tradition and habit again exercised their baneful influence on the general public, and deterred Spaniards from continuing energetically an open and natural campaign of reform, the leaven of the painful deceptions due to the unexpected results of the war, still remained and continued working. The angry denunciations in the national Press ceased, partly owing to the control and censorship exercised by the authorities, who always display in Spain much greater energy in repression than they do in constructive and ameliorative action. Nevertheless, some part at least of national conscience had been touched and slightly awakened by the country's misfortunes; and refused to be permanently silenced by the obsolete methods of autocratic officialdom. Spanish fathers continued to discuss amongst themselves and in the bosom of their families the causes of their country's misfortunes. In this way a subtle change took place in the atmosphere in which the youth of Spain was brought up and prepared for its future duties. The result is seen in the comparatively large number of young men who are now seriously applying themselves to preparation for their country's regeneration. *In them*, and not in the worn-out leaders (political or

military) of an earlier generation, lies the hope of the friends of Spain, who know and acknowledge the many good qualities of the Spanish race, and who believe that a politically healthy and economically strong nation in the Iberian Peninsula would be a valuable aid to those who are working conscientiously for the peace and advancement of the whole world.

The majority of young Spaniards are on the side of democracy and liberty. It cannot be denied that Spaniards as a whole are only too ready to talk rather than to act. A very large number of them are able to speak easily, fluently and forcibly in public (shyness or nervousness in public being amongst the least frequent defects of the Spanish character) so they are apt to spend all their energy in sterile bursts of oratory, and to feel quite satisfied if they have achieved a momentary and personal success in discussion with their fellows. There is little justification, however, for the charge of insincerity so often brought against them by people who do not understand them. If it must be admitted that the results of this verbal activity are very disappointing, the blame for such an unsatisfactory state of things ought to be apportioned where it belongs, and the greater share of it be cast on the culpable neglect of those statesmen who seldom make any attempt to carry out when in power the reforms which they have heard advocated outside Congress. The average middle-aged Spaniard of our time is accustomed, and one might also add that he is resigned, to his condition of political ineffectiveness and sterility. But even he is much more alive to the imperative need of a change in the Government and

administration of his country than he was a few years ago. Present circumstances do not afford him much opportunity for greater activity in a campaign for improvement; he is quite unaccustomed to act on his own initiative and to create such an opportunity. What he needs greatly is leadership, together with the power of turning to practical use the beautiful phrases which his oratorical gifts place at his disposal to unite for a definite purpose the will and energy of those who come under his influence. When parties are personal and programmes non-existent, it is no wonder that private individuals are convinced in advance that no efforts made by them can ever influence events in the way they desire. With his innate abhorrence of all effort, whether mental or physical, the contemporary Spaniard finds it only too easy to draw back at the first sign of any obstacle or difficulty, and to tell himself that politics are dirty and, therefore, best left to those who specialise in handling them. Unsatisfactory as the leaders of Spanish political parties have shown themselves, it is to the top or somewhere near the top that the average Spaniard still looks for guidance. It seems to be rather too soon to hope for the appearance in the lower ranks of any one with sufficient personality and magnetism to form and lead a new party, which shall at last undertake in earnest the reforms which almost the whole country demands with the greatest vehemence. But such a man may appear. As the Spanish proverb puts it: "*Donde no se piensa salta la liebre*" (The hare leaps from the bush where we least expect her).

CHAPTER V

JUSTICE

Del hombre arraigado
No te verás vengado.
SPANISH PROVERB.
(On a man of property you will never be avenged.)

THE whole administration and methods of the law in Spain are generations, if not centuries, behind the times. Justice in its real sense is not to be found there, for even if a righteous sentence is in the long run imposed by upright judges, it is a thousand to one that the criminal has already amply expiated his crime by a long imprisonment whilst awaiting trial. For a long time no notice was taken of the protests raised by people of all classes against the law's delays, in criminal cases especially. Although reforms were made in 1882, as usual they were never put into practice. It is one of the irritating circumstances connected with the investigation of all social grievances in Spain, that a Spanish lawyer, or even an ordinary well-educated member of the public, can almost invariably point to some law or decree which dealt with a particular grievance in an exemplary and thorough manner, which does not prevent, however, the continuance of the state of things of which complaint is made. In one noteworthy respect all Spanish Governments seem to resemble the delightful

picture of the Mikado, in Gilbert's famous opera, who was satisfied with his Chancellor's assurance that, as His Majesty *must* be obeyed, therefore he could rest assured that he *had* been obeyed, and his decrees executed. When that attitude is adopted, as it almost invariably is in Spain, an investigator is reduced to asking why, if the law lays down certain rules and regulations, everybody still complains of the lack of them or of their non-enforcement. Almost invariably the only reply he will receive will be the shrugging of his interlocutor's shoulders. If he persists, he will be asked what he himself would do to obtain the fulfilment of a law which is quietly ignored by the people whose duty it is to see that it is carried out.

There are signs, nevertheless, that this state of affairs will not be allowed to continue. It was of small consequence when it affected only real criminals, who were not supposed to have any claim to consideration of any kind. But the undercurrent of social movement, which is taking place in Spain (helped by the stubborn, unyielding and quite mediæval attitude of the country's rulers and authorities in general) is creating a new class of "accused," or an inconvenient type of people not actually criminals. These people are no longer left to depend entirely on their own resources; many of them belong to trade unions or other organisations which, though still in the main impotent to effect real reform, are strong enough to stand up in defence of their members and to denounce boldly the abuses of authority. Failing such organisations the columns of the public Press are always open

now to anything which may prove a stick with which to beat the Government in power, if the Government in power does not happen to impose a censorship! The general public realises that, if it tolerates any longer the old kind of abuses, it becomes quite involuntarily a victim to them; it has now a feeling of solidarity with many so-called offenders which it could never feel with a thief or murderer.

A very significant proof of what I say is to be found in a circular published in the Madrid *Gazette* towards the end of January, 1922, which the "Fiscal" of the Supreme Court addressed to his colleagues of the Courts of Assize or Sessions. The Fiscal is a kind of Public Prosecutor, and he appears to have some of the duties of our Solicitor-General. He began by lamenting the fact that his instructions with regard to more rapid procedure, the fundamental object of the law of forty years ago, have not had their due effect. He continued:

We have not advanced a step on the right road, especially with regard to the vice—it is almost a crime—of continual postponements or adjournments at the Sessions, so that as a general rule, it is a very rare thing that any serious or complicated case, *in which the wire-pulling of local politics intervenes*, is finished in one session. This deplorable state of things is worse in the provincial courts, through defects in their original organisation and installation. Growing indiscipline, and a lack of the necessary harmony and understanding between the court officials and others, render any co-operation or mutual help quite impossible in the social duty which they are expected to perform. This office regrets that the *vested interests of certain towns* prevent

the setting up of correctional justice—an indispensable institution if that and other irregularities are to disappear—and maintain the system of a single judge in civilian cases to decide, without the right to appeal, very important cases of *ejection and leases* heard by the town magistrates. . . . The tolerance and passivity of our organisations explain a phenomenon which does so much harm to the administration of justice, and which public opinion attributes, not to the profit obtained by earlier lawyers through the prolongation of civil suits which they did their utmost to bring about, but to the fact that the virtue of work is not as common amongst us as it ought to be, satisfaction being felt at any delay in the accomplish ment of heavy and troublesome tasks; so that it is in vain that one urges, time and again, that various judicial and fiscal posts should not be confused with those simple ecclesiastical benefices which are satirised by poets and prose writers. For the reasons given this department finds itself compelled, *for perhaps the hundredth time*, to refer to the theme of the adjournment of cases, especially when tried before a jury. Practice has shown us that, very soon after the implantation in our system of oral trials and juries, it was discovered that the adjournment of cases was a system which led to incomprehensible and unexpected success; it is for that reason that it has been exploited as stated. The crudeness of these remarks is fully justified when we find a trial for theft, which gave rise to a triple murder, that of two children and an old woman, and which, as the Minister and this department have learnt through a virile protest of the public, *lasted five years. . . . Such a fact*, in full twentieth century, *is corroboration of statements repeatedly made by Public Prosecutors*, that trials by jury are held just when it pleases the defence or the lawyers of the civilians who intervene in the prosecution, sometimes for their own benefit or for that of their client. The 22nd article of the Order in Council, of 8th March, 1897, is completely

ineffective, owing to the ease of justifying a personal reason for not attending the trial

The italics are mine. The vested interests are those of landlords and professional politicians and their *caciques*. The circular then enumerates the ephemeral nature of the results of the attempts which have been made to accelerate trials and to ensure that punishment shall closely follow the crime, so that it may be efficacious and exemplary; it goes on to refer to the slowness of the preliminary proceedings, and to the thousand and one means for preventing the carrying into effect of the law of 1882.

It is not only the lawyers who are to blame. The public must accept its full share of responsibility for the inefficiency of the administration of justice in Spain. The system of trial by jury in criminal cases was secured after a long agitation, and hailed as a great victory by the friends of progress. It failed lamentably in Barcelona and elsewhere just when it offered an opportunity for a demonstration of civic courage. So great was the fear of the terrorists in 1919 and 1920, that it was practically impossible to obtain a verdict of guilty in any of the many trials for murder and manslaughter arising out of the disputes between masters and men during that period. On the first day appointed for the trial in Saragossa of strikers caught red-handed after the murder of several officials, it was announced that the people summoned to form a jury had received threatening letters. No less than *eighteen* medical certificates of inability to appear were handed to the Court. It was known that as many more persons on the jury list had fallen suddenly

ill, and as the same thing had happened to one of the lawyers for the defence, the trial was adjourned. The Madrid newspaper *La Voz* remarked: "The state of the sick jurymen does not inspire anxiety for the moment; although we are told that their families are somewhat alarmed." On the date next fixed for the trial, five days later, only twenty-one persons presented themselves out of forty-two who had received summonses to appear. The remainder sent medical certificates to excuse their absence. But a jury was at last formed. This time it was the turn of *El Sol*, of Madrid, to comment on the matter as follows:

> Apart from the reasons, which may be fully justified, the public is expressing its surprise at the epidemic which has suddenly attacked Saragossa, and which is quite unprecedented; but public opinion has already diagnosed it in a very graphic manner.

So much for the working of the courts. I have only to add that, although many Spanish judges are honest men, there are a number who depend upon the professional politicians for their posts. This simply means that their justice is well tempered with politics—and all that this word means in Spain—before it is handed out. In this respect the civil side is, if possible, made worse than the criminal administration. But bad as the working of the courts undoubtedly is, it is mild compared with the evils from which prisoners suffer, either whilst awaiting trial or suffering punishment.

Councillor Lopez Baeza made this remark at a sitting of the Madrid City Council in March, 1922:

"The estimates for the current year of the Madrid gaols for persons under arrest and awaiting trial are 674,978 pesetas, as against 283,548 pesetas in 1917." He added, in order to explain the great increase of 138 per cent. in five years, that it was due to the action of the Director of Public Order, or Chief of Police, who sent to gaol hundreds who could not be tried by the Courts *for the simple reason that they had done no wrong*. The Socialist councillor, Señor Saborit, at once called attention to the gravity of this statement, and mentioned a case within his own knowledge, in which the Director had imposed a fine of 500 pesetas (£20) on an assistant in a Madrid theatre who had failed to recognise him, and therefore asked him to show his ticket. . . . Señor Saborit added that under such circumstances nobody was safe, and the gaols would soon be too small. He asked the mayor to intervene in order to lessen the number of arrests. In reply the mayor promised to use his influence to prevent the attendant going to prison if he failed to pay the fine.

In England, where an arrested person must be brought before a magistrate within twenty-four hours after his arrest, and sufficient cause shown then for his further detention, it would for many people be quite impossible even to imagine the state of affairs still prevailing in Spain; and this in spite of its *régime* as a constitutional monarchy, and of the fact that every adult male not in prison has a vote at parliamentary elections. It is true that the vast majority of Spanish citizens live from one year's end to another without having more to do with the police or with

gaol than the average British householder of the same class. That is because they live for business and family only, and carefully avoid taking any share whatever in public life, even to the extent of never voting at elections for members of Congress, and of often not knowing even the names of the men who represent their wards on the municipal council. The plain man-in-the-street in Spain does not suffer, except in very exceptional circumstances, any more molestation than his counterpart in Britain. To reach and maintain a state of peace and tranquillity he must spend his whole energy on his daily work, his home, his club, or his simple amusements. He must not allow any utopian ideas of doing his duty to his country to divert him from that simple *régime*; nor imagine that he can join a political party, or interest himself in any municipal affairs, and still retain entire freedom of action and full liberty of person. If he is a skilled artisan or a mere labourer he must not allow himself to be nominated or elected to any position of responsibility within his own trade union. If he is a trader of any kind he will be careful not to make himself too prominent in any matters affecting the relations between his class and the authorities. Even as a simple householder, without any of these connections, he will scrupulously avoid giving any cause of offence to the sub-mayor for his district, and he will endeavour, through the womenfolk of his household, to keep on the best terms possible with local officials, such as the constable and the dustman. From the moment that he takes part in public affairs he is a marked man. This will, of course, be all to his

advantage if he is on the side of the ruling party and, therefore, of the authorities, which for the most part change with each change of ministry. In such case the greater his influence within his party, the greater is his immunity from risk of trouble of any kind from that party while in power. If, on the other hand, he should belong to the Opposition or, worse still, should he be in the ranks of either Radicals or Socialists, or Labour organisations, taking an active part in their affairs, and fighting politically to secure their triumph, he is at once a doubly-marked man. He will have to walk warily if he is to escape a host of petty annoyances and even still worse things. This applies, of course, in different degrees, according to his place of residence, as it is obvious that he is not as likely to be continuously under the minute observation of the ruling powers in large cities like Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and others, as he will be in smaller towns and in villages. About these, their political fauna, and local methods, more will be found in Chapter VII. They afford matter for interesting study and comment, and the events which take place in them are of a somewhat different order from the kind of molestation which may be practised in a large city.

There are periods when practically nobody outside a limited circle in Spain is free from arrest on very trivial grounds or the merest suspicion. Such a time occurred at the beginning of March 1921, when the Prime Minister, Señor Eduardo Dato, was assassinated when riding in his motor car between Congress and his home. Although warning had been given in

several ways that some outrage would be attempted against the Prime Minister, the police authorities of Madrid failed to take any effective precautions against such an attempt. This is obvious from the astounding fact (worthy of some imaginary country in comic opera) that the officers detailed to shadow Señor Dato were not provided with any means of locomotion to enable them to keep pace with his motor car. As their superiors were well aware, they actually did their " shadowing " from the platform of an ordinary electric tramcar, which might be hundreds of yards behind the Premier's car. The crime having been committed, however, the zeal of the authorities in their efforts to secure the criminals knew no bounds. Many *hundreds* of innocent men were arrested throughout Spain and subjected to great inconvenience, annoyance, and loss. Large numbers were kept in gaol *for months* before obtaining their release. Not one of those first arrested was brought to public trial—although most of them had to undergo (some of them many times) that searching examination in gaol, which is the arbitrary and unspeakable practice in Spain and other more civilised countries. *El Liberal*, of 20th March 1921, described the police methods in Madrid at that period as follows :

House-to-house searches and the arrests of quiet citizens follow one another without rhyme or reason. Hordes of legal and governmental sleuths fall on the outer suburbs, and search rooms and furniture, or carry off respectable citizens, causing natural alarm to their families. . . . When there is the slightest logical basis

for suspicion, these excesses of official enthusiasm can be excused. They are, frankly, to be censured when they are only done to work off energy, justify zeal for duty, or merely to satisfy impertinent curiosity. . . . There was recently arrested a respectable trader of Madrid, who was hauled out of bed by fellows with pistols in their hands, because of the simple coincidence that his name resembled that of one of the supposed authors of the outrage.

The whole family of a man suspected of participation in the crime, *including his parents and relatives by marriage*, was arrested in Barcelona. When Spaniards themselves, though innocent of any crime or even misdemeanour, can be arrested in the arbitrary manner above described, and kept in confinement without trial, and for an indefinite period, at the caprice of any kind of authority, it follows that foreigners in Spain must walk warily if they do not wish to expose themselves to interminable trouble, inconvenience, and even loss of personal liberty. A great deal of the time of British Consuls in Spanish ports is taken up with the task of saving British seamen from languishing for indefinite periods in Spanish prisons. An opulent-looking tourist does not, of course, run the same risks—with money, perhaps education, and a little Spanish, he is able to avoid many of the inconveniences which beset a happy-go-lucky sailor or fireman out for an evening's pleasure.

The number of inhabitants of Spanish gaols always grows rapidly in times of industrial conflict. Workmen and their families must walk very warily indeed if they are not to find themselves locked up until, at least, the end of the struggle. The first cry of the

employers, and it must be said *of the middle classes in general*, in the case of any strike which shows signs of organisation on the part of the men, is *to demand the detention and close confinement of the officials of the trade unions concerned.* The authorities are usually only too ready to find or invent a pretext for acceding to that demand. In spite of all extremist vapourings and denunciations, which are invariably made as soon as trouble begins, it is as a matter of fact extremely rare that any acts of violence are done by strikers outside the turbulent province of Catalonia. "Peaceful picketing" is not yet legalised in Spain as in Great Britain. It is, therefore, of frequent occurrence that a man is arrested for inciting his fellow-workers to keep away from their work whilst a strike is in progress. No wonder, therefore, that the population of Spanish gaols showed a large increase between 1917 and 1922—a fact which goes a long way towards explaining the heavy increase in the cost of maintaining those institutions which so greatly troubled the Labour members of the Madrid City Council. During the post-war period strikes and lock-outs have been numerous, and as the Spanish character tends to excess in most things, the struggle between conflicting interests has been violent and ruthless in manufacturing districts. For several years the prisons of Barcelona have been packed full of men who had been arrested on the flimsiest of pretexts, or merely because they belonged to the Communist Party. Many of them were kept in close confinement, under circumstances of great hardship, for periods which in some cases exceeded two years, and then

transferred to distant prisons for a further period before they were at last released *without any charge ever having been made against them in a court of law.*

No surprise can be felt when the victims of such illegal and arbitrary treatment leave prison with hearts fuller of burning hate against society as now constituted than when they were arrested; nor that their friends and relatives should be drawn to share those feelings at last. Nothing is more tenacious and exasperating than a sense of great injustice. Only the most rabid reactionaries profess to believe that any good can come from the use of such illegal methods in the attempt to suppress the exercise of the right of free speech or lawful association. The whole process is startlingly out of date in the twentieth century. It is a complete revelation of the curious mentality of men who are quite unaffected by the general onward march of progress in other lands, and unable to realise that the development of education and comparative facility of communications make it impossible for any country, however isolated it may have wished to be from the world outside it, to maintain an obsolete system of Government. Fortunately for Spain she has now a sufficient number of progressive citizens, and (between censorships) a sufficiently independent Press, to inspire hope in the minds of the victims of her archaic police organisation. The abuses committed by petty tyrants become known and are energetically denounced in the columns of Liberal and Radical newspapers, by men who do not fear to sign their names to their articles, and whose lives are in many cases proof of the honesty

and single-mindedness of their purpose. No small number of these journalists have themselves known what it is to be under arrest at the whim of some chief of police or other official, because they have commented too freely for his liking on some of his arbitrary acts, or have refused to acknowledge his right to control or censor their articles. They know full well the risks run by all Spanish citizens who adopt an independent or critical attitude towards those in power. The files of their journals would reveal an unending stream of police injustice similar to or worse than that shown in the few incidents quoted, and would justify what *El Liberal* calls the "terror felt by many persons when obliged to intervene in matters of justice, even as helpers."

I have not been privileged to visit the interior of a Spanish prison, where the unfortunate victims of "law and order" await either a formal charge, or, having been charged and found guilty, are expiating their crime. I will be content to give, for the benefit of English readers, a translation of an article, published in 1922, by Señor Lucio M. Gil, a member of the Madrid Prisons Committee, after an inspection of prisons in the capital of Spain :

During the last visit of inspection which, as a member of the Prisons Committee of this capital, I made to the two penal establishments here, some things attracted my notice which will doubtless be repugnant to every man who wishes to see justice done. In the Women's Prison many of the inmates belong to the class which traffics with its own body, and some of these unhappy people are suffering from venereal diseases. There are, also, beggars

taken off the streets, and mothers of families undergoing short periods of imprisonment for infringing municipal bye-laws. All these women live in a single apartment, crowded together through lack of space. They cannot lie each of them in her own bed, but have to spread the palliasses on the ground all pressed together; and so they lie down. This repulsive crowding and manifest immorality continues in spite of all my protests at the meetings of our committee. The authorities, that is to say, the governor and the sanitary inspector, are aware of these facts. Why are no efforts made to prevent them? Are they waiting for some typhoid or other epidemic to attack the city before finding a remedy? What happens in the Women's Prison is also happening in the Penitentiary. The general departments are full to overflowing of men and boys. There are lads sixteen years old mixed with men of all ages; thieves known to the police; boys arrested in the streets for gambling, and men detained for slight offences or begging, amongst these being cripples and imbeciles. Blind men under police detention are also to be found there. The departments mentioned are in the basement and, with one exception, their only means of ventilation is a window about a yard wide which looks on to a courtyard at the ground level. The place is dark and damp; the floor is of earth, that is to say, not paved. More than forty individuals are there almost continuously. Here, also, the inmates have to throw their palliasses on the floor, and make what they call a common bed ("cama redonda"). In neither of these two prisons is there a disinfecting stove; clothes left by discharged prisoners are given to the new arrivals without being disinfected, or even washed. The stink in these pavilions is unbearable. The crowding together of human bodies and the lack of cleanliness have caused a veritable plague of parasites to infest these dens. What bitter deductions must be drawn from these facts? What is the use of the

pompous motto, "Hate the crime, and pity the criminal!" which is over the door of the Model Prison? *Let it be well understood that not one of those who suffer these tortures has been found guilty of crime.* Those under trial are confined in separate cells. The others are, theoretically, innocent; and if it is argued that the majority of them are thieves, we can reply that if they were misdemeanants, they have expiated their faults, and, therefore, owe society nothing. Some of these unfortunate people have been there for seven or eight "fortnights." Formerly they were released at the end of fourteen days, even though again arrested at the prison gate; but, nowadays, instructions are sent for them to repeat the term, and so it goes on six or seven times. Apart from the injustice of this procedure, it is illegal, as the provincial law only allows the authorities to impose a fine of £20 or fourteen days' imprisonment. Do we protest? Yes! It is our duty to do so. Let those whom it concerns contest these statements or not, perhaps they do not even know that the statements are made; but if those whose duty and obligations it is to carry out the law in strict equity, mock at the weak, the unfortunate, and those who are on a lower plane because deprived of liberty, we trust that the conscience of upright men will be touched; and we hope that they may at last comprehend that this demoralisation of *bourgeois* power is inherent in their own existence.

Professor Lopez Gerada, a teacher on the prison staff, referring to the few improvements introduced into the prison *régime* in Spain, says:

Until a short time ago our prisons were nothing but places of detention for criminals. We had not realised that the latter, if submitted to suitable treatment, might become useful members of the society which now rejects them. We have begun to do something in that direc-

tion, spurred on by nations who may almost be said to owe us the beginnings of their own civilisation ; but it is on such a small scale as to be merely sketchy as yet. Most of the buildings used as prisons are detestable, with scanty and ill-paid staffs, and their punishment systems have no scientific basis. . . . Those who think that hearts may be converted and minds freed under the present organisation of our prisons are mistaken.

A report by the Director-General of Prisons, published in January, 1921, may be quoted in support of the statement that the prison buildings are detestable ; it does not, of course, mean that all those not mentioned are in any better or worse condition. The report says that whatever the mistakes and irregularities committed in the construction of the Dueso Penitentiary Colony, the work must be continued, but the most urgent matter is to alter into a tiled roof the present flat roof of the only building so far erected, in order to prevent the frequent leakage of rainwater, which is causing cracks, and might endanger the building. The Central Prison, at Santona, is very cold and small, and should be abandoned as soon as the work at Dueso is finished. The Central Prison at Burgos, although clean and well managed, is very cold and unsuitable ; it is proposed to remove the prison to the old sugar factory near by. The San Miguel Prison, at Valencia, one of the largest in the country, is in a lamentable state of preservation and requires important repairs which ought to be put in hand at once. The Figueras Central Prison, installed in part of an old castle, presents a lamentable appearance ; it is not suitable for a prison although very

strong, as the dormitories, workshops, school, etc., are in casemates without sufficient light or ventilation. The Central Prison at Carthagena, "one of the best we have," will be all right after some inexpensive repairs, it being sufficient to re-build the central nave which has fallen, and to make the cell department safe! The Barcelona Penitentiary "is a model of discipline and good management," unlike the Valencia Penitentiary, where the governor had to be suspended, and where there was "an absolute lack of clothing, utensils and the most necessary things for medical attendance." The provincial prison, at Almeria, "was installed twenty years ago in an old house, which is not and never was suitable; and as no repairs have been effected during that time there is serious danger of a catastrophe, in spite of the walls having been shored up to prevent the collapse of the whole building." The Youths' Reformatory, at Alcalá, is in an old building which, "in spite of repeated reforms in order to make it inhabitable, is still unsuitable for its purpose."

Could there be an official document more damaging to the prestige of all the people responsible for such things? It might be duplicated in almost every phase of Spanish administration. Yet very few of the public trouble even to read such articles and reports in the newspapers, being firmly convinced that nothing will be done to mend matters. They therefore shrug their shoulders and pass on to the next scandal. It is admitted that there are exceptions, like the Barcelona Penitentiary mentioned above. *All Spaniards know that almost everywhere the lot of the unhappy prisoner*

in Spain to-day is little, if any, better than it was in the hard, careless, and uncivilised days of the Middle Ages.

The Military Directorate is to " purify " public life. Up to the time of writing these lines nothing has been done to " purify " prisons throughout Spain—and they badly need it. It is true that many " criminals " and other persons detained have been liberated, in order to make room for officials and others guilty of supporting the constitutional *régime* and, incidentally, of feathering their nests under it. Actual prison administration would appear not to require any improvement, since, curiously enough, this is perhaps the only phase of political life which has been overlooked in the verbose and all-promising manifestoes which have been issued by Primo de Rivera and his colleagues.

There is probably a good reason for this. Those who know anything about Spain will be able to guess what it is.

CHAPTER VI

THE WORKERS

Dos linages solos hay en el mundo, el "Tener" y el "No Tener." SPANISH PROVERB.

(There are but two families in the world: the Haves and the Have-nots.)

THERE cannot be any other civilised country in the world where the labouring classes have as much right to complain of their lot in life, and to rebel against it by every means in their power, as they have in Spain. Few, if any, are the countries where similar conditions of unfairness and oppression would not have led long ago to much more violent explosions than any hitherto known in the Iberian Peninsula.

In spite of the revolution of 1868, and of the theoretically Liberal Constitution under which successive Governments (before the Military Directorate) exercised their powers, the whole structure of Spanish society is still based on and regulated by customs and habits of thought and action which have entirely disappeared from better-educated and more advanced countries; they retain and perpetuate many of the evils of the Middle Ages and of still more remote feudal times. The main line of demarcation between classes in Spain to-day is still that drawn between workers and the minority which lives on and enjoys

the results of their work. So much is this the case that even the recently formed (and still not very numerous) class of manufacturing, mining, shipping, commercial, and banking magnates holds practically the same ideas regarding its subordinates as those held by the landed proprietors and the titled aristocracy regarding everybody except themselves, and treats them with equal scorn, tyranny and severity. This applies not only to those who literally earn their bread by the sweat of their brow and the work of their hands, but to every kind of paid labour, whether manual, commercial or technical. In general terms, and with very few exceptions, every Spaniard, man or woman, despises those to whom he pays salary or wages. He treats them as individuals who have no claim whatever to his consideration, and to whom he himself has no duty and is under no obligation. He refuses to recognise that his own relative comfort and freedom are largely due to their efforts. Nowhere are intellect and attention to duty so little appreciated and so poorly remunerated as in Spain. Every business man considers himself entitled to much more than the proverbial lion's share of the proceeds of his business, and to the blind submission and unquestioning obedience of his employees. Every lady looks upon and treats her maidservants as though they were the dirt under her feet.

Nobody ought to feel surprise, therefore, to learn that the unfortunate under-dog in Spain (whatever his or her duties and relative status) is frequently sullen, indifferent, and incompetent. He only gives the very minimum of service in return for the insuffi-

cient pay and scanty benefit which he receives from his master and patron. Until very recent years there were many women working from morning to night in mills and workshops for 10*d.* a day, and some did not earn even that miserable wage. An ordinary workman received 2*s.* 5*d.*, or even 1*s.* 8*d.*, per diem. He had to be highly skilled at his work, and in the full vigour of manhood, to receive a wage of 4*s.* A clerk or shop assistant thought himself well off with £4 a month. Some very slight improvement had taken place in industrial districts before the Great War; but an employee was, indeed, a fortunate man if he received £10 monthly. In spite of the enormous rise in rents and food prices since 1914 there are still many respectable families of civil servants and other non-manual workers who have to exist in some way on no higher income. A well-known Spanish writer, in the *Correspondencia de España*, of 2nd November, 1920, said:

Whilst many millions of Spaniards lacked the most essential things, and did not even know what it was to sleep undressed, in a proper bed, a few thousand others enjoyed all the refinements which wealth can supply. I have known "gentlemen" who have grown rich through the daily exploitation of thousands of workmen; who dared to boast that they "gave" those men the means of living. They never said that they lived on the work of thousands of men; but even took praise to themselves for what they did. Are there not hundreds of counts and marquises rewarded with a title of nobility when they ought to have had a slave driver's whip, on no better claim than that they have made millions through the work of the men whom they

exploited in their factories, and whose products they used afterwards to exploit half the population ? Whilst the world lasts there will be rich and poor, clever people and foolish, educated persons and illiterates, prominent men and men unable to raise themselves. The man of talent who is born to invent, create and command, will always be superior to those who do not possess those qualities. Therefore, there will always be differences in the world ; some will earn much and others only a little. What is no longer tolerable, however, is that men should vilely exploit other men. . . . Many have grown rich solely through their industry. But the man does not exist who can make his capital produce anything in manufacture without the assistance of labour, and, therefore, of workers.

The higher wages which the changed conditions of living since the Great War made indispensable, especially in industrial communities, were only wrung from employers long after they were due in many cases. In only too many instances they have not sufficed even to maintain the very low pre-war standard. In this respect Spain, although a neutral in the Great War, has experienced the same difficulties as other countries. Materials were scarce ; and men, deceived by the possession of more money than they had ever had before, did less work than usual. Disputes between masters and men were frequent and often violent. But no advantage to workers resulted from the country's exceptionally favoured situation. Strikes and other troubles delayed house building in the cities, and the scarcity of imported fittings enabled the home manufacturers to charge high prices for inferior articles, which lowered the standard of work.

The world-wide economic crisis which began in 1921

caused wages to fall again in Spain as in other countries, and the Spanish working man is worse off now than ever before. The cost of living has not fallen in his country even as much as it has in Great Britain, but has even continued to rise in some things. No fair and just comparison can be made between Spanish and English cost of necessities, because the commodities which form the bulk of those necessities differ in the two countries owing to differences of climate and production, and therefore of taste and custom. Fortunately for the country and its people, Spain has hitherto escaped trouble arising from a surplus of females and their demand to compete with men in every phase of life. The Spanish wife and mother is still the housewife and the true helper of her husband. She is quite willing to work as hard as he does, and frequently does work much harder, not only in the manual labouring classes, but in those so-called higher classes, where English women of the same rank only look to-day for pleasure and self-indulgence. She does not spend her mornings in gossiping, her afternoons at bridge parties, and her evenings in dancing, but she bears children and cares for them and their father as a true woman, conscious of the supreme importance of woman's work in the world. . . .

Police forces in Spain (save perhaps those in the lowest grade called municipal, who, being very poorly paid, badly trained and quite uncultured, are themselves little better than labourers in shabby uniforms) are the natural enemies of the working man under present conditions, and regarded by him as such. Their organisation and instructions do not

give the officers of " law and order " much individual liberty of action. They usually hunt in couples—and their poor education does not qualify them for such liberty. Add to the misery of the workers a hot-blooded nature and a propensity when in authority as police to use cudgels instead of arguments, and there are all the ingredients necessary for beginning a riot on the slightest provocation. When the police are called upon to make an arrest they are seldom able to discriminate in treatment between one class of offender and another. They still commit the barbarity (so often severely condemned by Spanish newspapers) of marching not only men, but women and even children, handcuffed, for long distances through the streets. Thus, even an innocent person or a mere misdemeanant loses his sense of shame and becomes hardened by the publicity given to his misfortune or disgrace.

Spanish authorities have the unfortunate habit of making a display of force, both in and out of season. However peaceful and natural any meeting or celebration of the workers may be, it is always attended by a host of policemen. Their short swords and revolvers convey, as they are intended to convey, an impression of force, which rouses even in peaceful citizens a feeling of oppression and anger. During the period of more than three years (1919–22) when Constitutional Guarantees (equivalent to the English Habeas Corpus Acts) were suspended in Spain, meetings of working men with none but pacific intentions were repeatedly prohibited or broken up without ceremony. Policemen cannot serve as the

instruments of arbitrary authorities without themselves becoming overbearing and tyrannical. In such circumstances they are apt to forget that the real purpose of their existence is to prevent crime and disorder, and not merely to hunt like wild beasts the individuals who may not conform to all the multitudinous good and bad laws and regulations made to protect society or to repress evil-doers. A true account of the actions of the Barcelona police, for instance, would fill a volume and horrify. For my part I cannot blame the workmen of that city for many of the things which they have done in recent times to defend their rights as men, and their liberty as citizens. In the Catalan capital law is replaced by lawlessness on the part of both rulers and ruled. Up to a very recent date murders by both parties were the order of the day. In Spain this always leads to merciless vendettas which would disgrace a savage tribe in Africa.

The attitude of senseless revenge which animates all those who participate in these internecine struggles arouses pessimism about the future of the country. The apparent inability of its middle classes to make their influence felt and effect the removal of many grievances before it is too late is enough to make one despair. According to official statistics, the percentage of illiterates in the city of Barcelona (not the province of the same name, which includes the city) is only about 8 per cent. against more than 50 per cent. for the whole of Spain. That is proof enough that the Barcelona workman is a comparatively educated man; which means that he will not submit

to tyranny. It is greatly to be regretted that, owing to the feelings of caste, to which reference has been made, the classes of society immediately above that of the artisan fail to feel their solidarity with him in such matters; and the members of the reactionary or Church-and-State parties can conceive of no other remedy for any of his grievances than brutal and persistent repression of the individual himself.

Trade unionism and Labour organisation in general are such ordinary features of life in Great Britain that an Englishman finds it difficult to realise that, in the twentieth century, there can be a country calling itself civilised, where such associations have no legal personality; yet such is the case in Spain. Even though it be admitted that trade unionism in our country has been carried far beyond the original objects of its founders, and has become almost as great a danger to the individual liberty of the workers as was the power formerly held over workmen by their employers, it is impossible, nevertheless, to deny that it has accomplished a great and much-needed task in improving the general standard of living amongst workpeople. It has shown the large majority of them that more permanent benefit may be obtained by peaceful means and constitutional action, than can be hoped for from violent methods. The terrorism which has cast a stain on the good name of Barcelona and several other Spanish towns could not have developed and found many partisans if its first moderate objects had been obtainable within the shelter of the law. No impartial observer can blame Spanish workmen for the hold which extreme doctrines

obtained on them, when the Bolshevist oligarchy overthrew the Imperial Government of Russia, and proclaimed that the day of revenge and ultimate happiness had arrived for all who were downtrodden and oppressed. Many Spanish workmen, who had lost all faith in the doctrine of resignation preached by their national Church and had become Agnostics or Atheists, accepted Lenin as the new Messiah and his bombastic speeches as the death-knell of all oppressors. They accepted his propaganda without hesitation or looking backwards, and hastened to form illegal associations to consolidate and spread his influence. They gave themselves up to the wildest excesses of speech and action, as though the country were already at their feet.

Nothing shows more clearly the organisation of Spanish society into well-defined castes, the members of each one of which avoid as far as possible all contact with those of another class ranking lower than their own, than the fact that the Spanish Labour Party finds its membership almost entirely restricted to men who earn their living by purely manual toil. Scores of "middle-class" writers and workers sympathise warmly with the aims of the party (the extreme Communists having now withdrawn from it) and do not hesitate to write burning articles about the state of affairs in Spain. Yet the class which modern jargon calls "intellectuals" remains, almost to a man, within the fold of either the Conservative or the Liberal Party, or one of their factions. Scarcely a dozen of them will be found officially and openly affiliated to the Labour Party.

Although trade unions have no legal personality in Spain, the lack of them is fully realised, and a suggestion was made that a law be passed to create them and to make membership of them compulsory for all workers, similar organisations with compulsory membership being simultaneously created for employers. It is astonishing how the idea of compulsion nearly always accompanies official or semi-official initiative in Spain. How readily Spanish rulers fall in with suggestions which appear to reinforce the principle of authority and remind the public that all it does is subject to the approval of its tyrannical masters! As was to be expected, the suggestion was rejected by the workmen of Barcelona, the city where it had been made. A meeting, representing forty-three different trades, was held there on 24th February, 1922, to discuss and pass resolutions, giving the bases on which a law of trades unions should be drafted. The first resolution approved was as follows:

That the workpeople of both sexes belonging to any and the same trade or calling are entitled to group themselves in a trade union, which shall have the absolute right to spread the doctrines, principles and ideas which may be professed by different groups of workpeople, and allowed by Article XIII. of the Constitution, and Article I. of the law of 1887, which regulates the right of public meeting.

Does it not seem extraordinary that near the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century it should still be necessary for workers in a civilised country to ask for the recognition of such elementary rights?

As I have stated, the grievances of the Spanish

working classes have been recognised by many writers in the country who do not belong either to them or to the Labour Party. A striking book on these urgent matters was published by the well-known author, Señor Rafael Gasset, at the beginning of 1921, with the title "Rebellious Humanity" ("La Humanidad Insumisa"), and the sincere journalist, Señor Luis Anton del Olmet, in his review of the book in the *Heraldo de Madrid*, made the following statements:

Can an agreement be arrived at between the opulent classes and the rebellious ones? At once pessimism, which, in my case, is neither temperamental nor applicable to everything, replies: In Spain there is no possible solution. Below there is hatred, above there is repression, and nothing else! That is the truth. . . . Señor Gasset belongs to the select body of statesmen who abhor Lenin and Trotsky, that is to say, to the evolutionists; but men possessed with devils prefer Clemenceau and Maura, who, being irreconcilable, provoke anger and hasten the moment for proletarian dictatorship and sans-culottism. . . . In Spain that indulgent and conciliatory spirit, which does not mean either a cowardly surrender to crime or a weak protection of helplessness, but legislation and more legislation, is destined to fail, and prove sterile like all imperialism. . . . Señor Gasset acknowledges the existence of a human majority who live in slavery; that their desire of redemption is legitimate and ought to be satisfied without causing less production, without mere words, by means of tangible reforms, and that the Government charged with such a fecund duty ought to repress at the critical moment, both bourgeois violence and the tyranny which leads to anarchy. . . . Time passes as we read, and dawn approaches. . . .

Spanish Governments in this enlightened age have

found a very effective way of dealing with those dangerous persons who have had the temerity to voice their ills, or in any way to attempt to remedy them. Deportation is one of the weapons most generally used to fight strikes and all kinds of Labour troubles. Both the Civil Governor of a province and its Chief of Police appear to have the power of disposing at their will of the body of any individual who incurs their displeasure; until quite recent years few persons above the working class cared in the least what was done with those extremely dangerous individuals who dared to interfere between master and men in trade disputes. Although in most other matters the laws of Spain are numerous and theoretically almost perfect, those which deal with trades unions and the general right of workmen to combine, in order to secure better living conditions for themselves and their families, are of a frankly and openly repressive nature. In fact, in such matters Spain is little farther advanced than was Great Britain at the time of the Chartist riots. Most of the legislation attempted or projected is based on the compulsory form of association for workmen, which is strongly resisted, not only by the individuals directly concerned, but also by all those persons who have begun to realise that progress on a feudal basis is an impossible anachronism nowadays, and that relative peace and tranquillity in the Labour world can only be achieved with the help and concurrence of Labour itself. In Spain the old methods still rule. Disputes between masters and men only too frequently degenerate into mere appeals to the effects of starvation on

one side, and to outrages on the other side. So-called attempts to find a settlement are sometimes made by the Civil Governor or the Chief of Police, or both. Generally they have separate interviews with representatives of the parties concerned, the proceedings at the interviews with the men's leaders usually consisting of official threats as to what will happen to them and their colleagues if the dispute is not quickly ended. The most frequent of those threats, and the one which embitters the struggle beyond all British conception, is that of deportation. However convinced a man may be of the justice of his cause, and however determined to endure any hardship and privation in order to gain victory, his resolutions are apt to waver when he knows that continuance of his resistance will entail separation from his wife and family. His dependents will be left to fend for themselves, or to subsist on the meagre pittance which the union funds or public charity supply. This charity comes from his own class only. The middle classes in Spain will never help strikers, no matter how legitimate the latter's demands may be. The man himself will tramp the Spanish highways under escort, sent from one town to another until his tormentors tire or his resolution falters. But that does not give the full measure of the barbarity of the way in which these arbitrary measures are sometimes applied. Not only adults, men and women, but boys and youths of tender age, are transferred in the same way from town to town. *In the large majority of cases of deportation no charge has been made against the victim.* Officially, he does not know of what he is accused. He may

have been arrested in bed at night, thrown into the local gaol, and, after a more or less prolonged sojourn there, added to a band of similar victims of the same abuse of power, and sent off along the road, sometimes handcuffed to a companion in misfortune. He goes to an uncertain destination, which in its turn may be only the starting point for further dreary pilgrimages to other places. The acts I describe are not tyrannous acts of long ago. They are current, almost every-day events. One of the best and most progressive capitalist morning newspapers of Madrid, *El Sol*, published not very long ago a strong article on the subject of deportations, which was commented on by the evening paper, *La Voz*, the same day. The latter announced that several workmen, deported from the town of Huelva, at the conclusion of the strike at the Rio Tinto Mining Co.'s establishment in the province of the same name, had arrived at Toledo, 354 miles away. The newspaper article continued :

> They have walked, under the escort of the Civil Guard, through four Spanish provinces. One of them has internal trouble and suffers horribly. No accusation has been brought against them ; their crime consisted solely in having been elected officials on the committees of workmen's associations.

That they were persons of reasonably good reputations is evident from the fact, stated in the columns of *El Sol* two days later, that one of them was correspondent for that paper in Campillo, and the other was correspondent for another Madrid daily, *La Libertad*, in Nerva. Only a month later the same newspaper referring to another batch of men deported

in the same way, that is to say, by road marching, from Barcelona to far-off Murcia, stated that it had received a letter from the men, declaring that :

they had passed through thirty-one prisons, in the majority of which they were not even given any sleeping accommodation, nor time to get themselves clean or to wash and change their clothes. Every effort had been made to make things hard for them. No accusation of any kind had been brought against any of them.

Another important Madrid newspaper, organ of a member of the recent Liberal Coalition Cabinet, gave the case, in its issue of 14th February, 1923, of a mere boy of ten years of age, who was similarly deported on foot from Madrid to Lérida without any other pretext than the defence of public order ! No wonder that the journalist reporting the matter could not restrain his indignation !

How far we are [he writes] from the civilised Universe ! . . . Are there no law courts in Spain ? Are there no Ministers ? Are there no other conscientious authorities ? It is derogatory to all of them that such an absurdity should happen. If that child is not at once returned to his parents, or at least placed under the charge of a magistrate, a school teacher or some education authority, all other authorities should resign. They are powerless against a petty official. All the charitable associations and committees should be dissolved, because they do not carry out their purpose ; they have neither the standing nor the energy necessary even to formulate a simple protest. . . . So the guilty ones are children ten years old, and they must be marched along the roads, handcuffed together, bare-footed, sobbing, shivering with

cold, terror and loneliness, in order that public order may be preserved !

About the same time another newspaper, *El Liberal*, announced that another batch of youths deported from Pontevedra, and consigned to various places hundreds of miles away, included four whose ages varied from ten to fourteen years. A month had elapsed since their departure, and they were still on the boundary of the province. This was denied by the Governor of Pontevedra, who said that the youths in question were young thieves and beggars of seventeen and eighteen years of ago, who were being returned to their native villages, as allowed by a Royal Order dated 8th January 1912. In its turn, *El Liberal* made further inquiries, and with full names and addresses and every other possible detail, including the steps taken by indignant sympathisers to have the youths released, it ratified and confirmed on 21st February, 1922, the information it had first published. This matter was also commented upon by *La Voz*, of 2nd March, 1922, in a short article, of which the final paragraph was :

> If the facts are to be twisted still more it will appear, officially, that the deported persons were horrible bandits in the flower of their manhood, who had been taken out in a paternal manner for a short walk along the beach.

The incidents quoted are not isolated, but typical. Other similar ones could be found in the files of Spanish newspapers during every month of the agitated year of 1921, and for some time previously and subsequently. The punishment of deportation is one

which has always been inflicted by arbitrary police and other authorities throughout Spain, as may easily be seen from its official recognition in the above-mentioned Order in Council of 8th January, 1912. The absolute divorce between rulers and ruled in Spain is shown by the fact that the public at large is always horrified when such barbarities are brought to its notice. As is the case with all the other innumerable abuses of authority in Spain, of which brief accounts will be found in other chapters, the first fierce flame of indignation burns up the energy of those who feel it. It dies out again before anything practical has been done to make impossible a recurrence of such acts of injustice. Resentment only stays with the persons who have suffered, and with their families and fellow-workers. The *bourgeois* have so many other things to think about, and are still so prejudiced by the feelings of caste which are perhaps stronger in Spain than in Hindustan, that they mostly fail to realise that they themselves are intimately concerned with all that affects the life of their less fortunate fellow-citizens; they forget that unchecked tyranny grows and spreads until no man or woman is safe. On the other hand, the workers do not forget. When the inevitable explosion happens in Spain small blame will attach to them if they are then unable always to make fine distinctions between their tyrants and those whose culpable neglect in failing to bring pressure on those alone through whom reform can come, causing the workers to continue suffering the gravest wrongs and most flagrant injustice. The Spanish middle classes know perfectly well that their

country is governed more in accordance with the ideas of the Middle Ages than with modern precepts. They themselves often feel the iron hand of a tyrannous and irresponsible police system which is, in practice, above the law itself. Any legal remedy against it which exists in theory is nullified by the slowness and costliness of getting it into motion, and because most of the administrators of the law are themselves, as individuals, convinced that repression is the only sound principle on which to deal with the complaints of those who are not content to remain for ever hewers of wood and drawers of water for others more favoured by fortune. This idea of force rather than justice *underlies all the relations* between the different classes of society in Spain.

El Socialista is the organ of the more moderate section of the Spanish Labour Party, the section which, after two delegates had been sent to Russia by the whole party at the end of 1920, refused to accept the report made by the extremist on his return from Moscow, and accepted instead the reasonable and statesmanlike report of the other delegate, Señor Fernando de los Rios, the well-known deputy to Congress and Labour leader. The opinions expressed by *El Socialista* are therefore deserving of every consideration. I quote, in translation, a leading article from it:

Nothing is as cruel and barbarous as are the laws of Spain. After the settlement of a strike, when a policy of peace ought to be substituted for that of hate developed during the struggle, the Governor of Huelva deported several comrades who were officials of the workmen's

organisation at Rio Tinto. Broken down by the march from town to town, escorted by the Civil Guard, those workers have reached Toledo. They will not stay in the imperial city. We do not know yet what hatred has prepared for them, after they have covered half Spain on foot. This, which is both cruel and barbarous, is allowed by the laws. In the Model Prison there are more than fifty persons detained by governmental order. They do not know why they are in prison. They have neither been questioned nor informed of any accusation against them. They are "governmental" prisoners. Now it happens that a judge, without committing a person for trial, can keep nobody in prison more than seventy-two hours. An unmannerly mayor, a stupid governor, or an inept chief of police can keep in prison whomever he likes within the bourgeois law! Foolish suspicion may fall on a peaceful citizen, or an infamous slander denounce him: his house is surrounded, his arrest effected with all the usual show of force, he is shut up in prison. Afterwards, there is a mere "Pray excuse!" though the victim may have suffered financial loss (not to speak of the inevitable moral loss) or fallen seriously ill. The law has provided for even this thing being done, without any chief of police being expected to sympathise or to recognise his own incompetency. . . . The law protects the policeman who carries out barbarous laws and orders more barbarous still; the law does not allow him to be civilised or even human. In the same way as he treats those of his own sex he ties and handcuffs women, whom he cruelly promenades, offending their sex and everybody's dignity, through a city which is not ashamed to permit so much pain and injustice. All this is legal. Those who carry it out are the instruments of a law made by the few, for the benefit of those few, and in order to manacle those who most completely obey it.

CHAPTER VII

AGRARIAN PROBLEM

Ares, no ares,
Renta me pagues.
SPANISH PROVERB.
(Plough or plough not, you must pay me the rent.)

I HAVE stated in the opening pages of this book that Spain is for the most part an agricultural country, and only to a small extent industrialised. Indeed, with the exception of the industrial communities of Barcelona and Bilbao, I may say that, broadly speaking, the remainder of the Spanish people depend upon the land and the wealth which comes from the land for their existence. This being the case, one may well ask the question: Who derives most benefits from the land—the legal owner, or the toiler who tills, sows and reaps? In Spain it is *always* the legal owner. This is, up to a point, true of other countries whose system of land tenure is based on feudalism. But in Spain there are circumstances which help to intensify the unfavourable position of the tenant. Landlords are not merely owners, but in many cases rulers or satellites of rulers. *Ergo*, every land law which reaches the statute book favours them—and generally to a superlative degree. No wonder then that the smallholders have gone from dissatisfaction at the

system (which gives the owner, whom they may never have seen, nearly all the fruits of their toil, leaving them in poverty) to an intense hatred of the rulers, owners, political bosses and agents, whose efforts have made existence precarious and comfort in life non-existent. This is not an exaggerated statement of the conditions which prevail throughout Spain, I repeat with emphasis, an agricultural country. This state of affairs is more intense in some parts than in others.

I will deal with the case of the southern province of Andalusia, where the agrarian problem has reached an acute stage. The preponderating importance of the agrarian problem in Andalusia, as compared with other parts of Spain, is due to causes of not very recent origin. Almost everything in Spain rests on tradition; the people there still live in practically the same atmosphere as did their ancestors many centuries ago. Customs and ideas, which would have died out generations back in countries of more active and changing life, persist from father to son without losing their influence or being forgotten. This applies particularly to agricultural regions, where the same rotation and routine of work go on unceasingly and unchangeably.

The land problem in Andalusia is the outcome of injustices committed when the Spaniards re-conquered that territory from the Moors, who have left behind so many traces of their occupation of it, and whose blood flows in the veins of Andalusian peasants. The latter had been hellenised and romanised in turn. When the Moors overran the south of Spain,

the Andalusians to some extent successfully resisted the invaders. Existing laws of irrigation, and the townships on the banks of the river Guadalquivir, confirm the statements of Arab historians, who tell us that the two peoples lived together in groups on lands which were greatly subdivided and well cultivated. When the Moors were expelled, the Spanish kings followed the usual practice in those days (overlooking the fact that many of the inhabitants of Andalusia were of Spanish or partly Spanish descent) and divided the land as rewards amongst the feudal barons who had assisted them in their campaigns. So they created for the first time immense holdings under one owner, instead of the small properties hitherto existing. Since those days two other causes helped to change the face of vast expanses. One is the rapacity of speculators, and the other the local political tyranny, *caciquismo*, which is allowed to reign unchecked and against all law and justice. To Andalusia, even more than to other parts of Spain, although the evil is very widespread, apply these words taken from an article in the clerical organ, *El Debate*, of 8th November 1921 :

Agrarian legislation is in reality *nil*, because all the laws and decrees relating to agriculture have always been based on premises which show that their authors knew as much about the matter as any landed proprietor who has neither lived on nor seen his estate might know. He only knows of its existence because he holds the title-deeds, and receives news of it from his steward or solicitor. However well-intentioned such laws may have been, there can be seen in all of them no sign of the man who is really competent because he himself has lived a

farmer's life, and seen its facts and needs from his day of baptism until death finishes off such a hero of the fields. We must undertake agrarian legislation quickly and in the right way, because our national well-being, progress and wealth depend on agriculture, and because it is a crime against our country to pass the time in laziness, doing nothing. If not, anarchy may wake us up only too quickly; and what we can do to-day with safety and justice, to-morrow may compel us to do in the hurry which means chaos and misery.

Señor Leon Leal, in the Madrid Atheneum, on 17th May, 1921, said:

The tenant is bound hand and foot by the terms of his tenancy; everything is at his risk, and no delay or reduction in the payment of rent is ever allowed, neither in a bad year, nor when a storm ruins the crops. He must repair all damage, including that caused to cultivated ground by animals of the chase; all improvements are the property of the owner of the land.

It is not only rents and the harsh conditions of his tenancy, however, which render miserable the life of the Spanish peasant and make him so ready and eager to leave his native land, in order to seek happiness and a proper reward for his labour. Town dwellers are able in many cases to snap their fingers at politicians, and live a more or less uneventful and peaceful life, free from their unbearable interference. The unfortunate peasant is at the mercy of landlords and local political bosses. The latter are frequently very useful to the local Member of Parliament and, therefore, enjoy through his influence complete immunity from the arbitrary proceedings. The name

universally given to these local tyrants throughout Spain is "*cacique*," and for want of a better word I shall use that one, in an attempt to show their methods and their influence on the agrarian problem in Spain.

It is seldom that one can read in the Spanish Press any comments on land problems and local politics in which there is no reference to a *cacique*. The name is also applied in the towns to political organisers who control a particular district. They can bring influence to bear on any body of electors, so as to be able to guarantee which way their votes will be cast at any time. But the town *cacique* is much less formidable, having fewer and less effective weapons at his disposal than his provincial counterpart. Sometimes the latter is hidden under the cloak of a legally appointed governor, who does not scruple to use his official position to hamper and hinder any attempt made by peasants or labourers to improve their lot. The person who was Governor of Palencia in March 1921 may be given as an example of such tyrants, my authority being an open letter published in the *Socialista*, of the 14th of that month. It was not contradicted nor its accuracy questioned. Señor Pedro Manuel, the signatory of the letter, wrote to complain of the treatment meted out to the Agricultural Labourers' Union founded during a Workers' Congress in Palencia, held in the previous October. The proposed rules of the Union were submitted to the governor in due course by the committee, but "as elections for Parliament were about to be held," the governor asked for time to consider the rules.

After two months of waiting and evasive replies, the governor at last approved the rules, but "suppressing entirely their first section, which set forth the aims of the union." To save time the committee accepted this answer and duly presented the rules again, to be told that they must first be confirmed by a meeting of representatives of all villages in the district. Whilst this was being arranged the local *Official Gazette* published an order from the governor to all mayors to close all the branches of the union, and to prevent them from acting. The meeting was held and the rules, duly confirmed, again sent to the governor, who made no objection to receiving them, but did not countermand his instructions to the heads of villages. Señor Manuel openly declares that the governor was protecting private interests, and adds:

We must know the reason for this war against an association which has not yet begun to act. Our governor is a native of the province, where he *holds estates and properties* which enable him to live in comfort. In his official position he looks upon himself as the defender of all those landowners in Palencia who think that agriculture can only be saved by paying low wages to their labourers, and by making them submit to their political whims so that at election times they may be mere groups of pawns at the caprice of village *caciques* who work on behalf of the greater *caciques* of the province. As our organisation tends to put an end to that, the governor does all he can to hinder the union of the labourers of Palencia.

A barrister of Palencia, Señor Diaz Caneja, lecturing in the Madrid Atheneum on the land question about

a month later, criticised severely and pungently the "barbarous, uncultured and illiterate *caciquism*," which he declared was a social sore.

An article in the *Libertad*, of 6th December 1921, gives so good a description of the state of affairs in nearly all the small towns and villages of Spain that I cannot do better than give a translation of it here:

We are going to speak of something monstrous, although it is more terrifying in its essence than in its appearance. It is a *cacique* who has more tentacles than an octopus, is more poisonous than a viper and does more harm than the plague. The unhappy inhabitants of the town of Domingo Perez, in the province of Toledo, live under the dominion of something fearful and omnipotent, against whose will it is impossible to rebel or to defend oneself. The frightened people of Domingo Perez call him "*the master*," and only when they are out of his reach do they dare to call him a *cacique*. This is really his proper designation, and it is one by which our readers, who know something about political fauna, will know what is meant, and will understand the nature of the misfortune which has overtaken the unhappy dwellers in Domingo Perez. Nevertheless, when they told us some concrete facts about this sinister personage, we were almost inclined to think that they make a habit of complaining. That there is no other law or authority in the place than his; that nobody can be anything, not even an inhabitant of the place, without his consent; that even the mayor, on the least sign of independence, ceases to be mayor! Why! my dear man, there is nothing particular about that! That the liberty and property of every one is at the fellow's mercy? What a bagatelle to make the residents of Domingo Perez complain! That the town's veterinary surgeon, for instance, is a relative of the *cacique*, and an

old man who has been physically incapable of his duties for the last thirteen years; that, through his lack of vigilance, all the sheep in the place are scurvy, and that the judge has had to act as vet., and has branded some sick animals as healthy ones, and *vice versâ*? Now tell us if there could be anything more amusing? That the judge is also the chemist and another relative of the *cacique*; that outrages and persecutions increase as election time draws near; that his real secretary was, and is, the messenger in the office, and the secretary's salary is being received by a son of the *cacique*, who is "studying in Madrid"? Can't you see, man, that all that is the most natural thing in the world, and, so to speak, the A.B.C. of a perfect *cacique*? That, in order to annoy a somewhat critical citizen, he has put in front of the street door a pedlar's stall of buns cooked in oil ("churros") so that nobody can put their nose outside? Come, come! that is showing genius in humour, and such a *cacique* ought to live in the old house in the Puerta del Sol (the Ministry of the Interior in the central square of Madrid) to enliven our miserable existence. That for want of a corner in which to sleep, a poor beggar, whom the municipality refused to help, died last winter of cold and hunger? Let us see, has not the *cacique* left a single tree in the place on which that obstinate beggar could have hanged himself? . . . Really, we think that the residents of Domingo Perez must have a habit of grumbling.

As showing some of the means by which a rural *cacique* in Spain can secure and maintain his power over his fellow residents, I quote another newspaper article. Señor Juan de la Cierva was at the time Minister for War and Member of Parliament for the district of Mula, which he had represented for twenty years. I should hesitate to write what happened, lest

it seem too ridiculous; I prefer to give a translation of the words used by *El Liberal*:

Señor La Cierva has organised with great prudence and tact, the political, administrative and judicial departments of that district. In all the municipalities, from the last watchman to the first town councillor, there is not a single individual, but who is affiliated to the patriarchal and paternal work of Señor La Cierva. It is the same in the County Council ("Diputación") and the Court of Session, in the Police Courts, and in the offices of the Civil Governor. As it is a work of salvation, it has been in Señor La Cierva's interest to surround himself with people unconditionally under his orders, and who will obey and interpret his policy. There is great agitation in Mula now. Possibly it is due to some egoist, some rebel, perhaps, who seeks to disturb the great work being done there!

The article goes on to say:

For this year's balloting 180 youths were on the list, and Mula had to provide sixty recruits for the Army. Appeals were made, and persons declared incapable by the Municipality who had been passed by the Council; of the 180 youths liable for military service, only eighty-six are found to be fit for it. There are twenty-seven deserters—some of whom are quietly walking about in the streets of Mula—and most of the exemptions are for lack of height, bad eyesight or deformity; there is one idiot. The great majority of the names of the exempted persons belong to families who pay the highest rates and taxes; to merchants, manufacturers and farmers. Even the idiot is of good family. It is needless to add that they are *all* favoured elements of the great party of which Señor Juan de la Cierva is the head. . . . It turns out that *all* the youths fit to serve, that is to say, the eighty-

six mentioned, are sons of working men, who are quite without influence. They have been unable, so far, to make use of any one of the measures provided by law in order to prove their right to exemption. For the last six years there has been no workmen's association in Mula, nor a single person economically independent who has been able to resist any abuses—if there have been any—of the policy which predominates there. I have spent three weary days in Mula, watching the working and administration of public affairs in a town of more than 10,000 inhabitants, all of whom obey one man—Señor La Cierva's *cacique*.

I have given these few examples of the behaviour of *caciques* in rural districts, in order that the reader may have some idea of their influence and the manner in which they aggravate the poverty stricken existence of the small man. The land tenant finds his way beset by them at every turn—without them, agrarian problems in Spain would be bad enough. But with these *caciques* we find a peasantry on the verge of distraction.

It is only fair to examine now what has been done in the direction of meeting some of the grievances of agriculture in general, so that this great danger to the country's peace and progress may be at least lessened, even if not altogether removed. This last is, of course, quite impossible under the present state of political affairs in Spain, because many of the labourers' complaints are indissolubly connected with matters of ordinary social rights, such as the right to form unions and associations for the purpose of attaining their aims of self-improvement and advancement.

The intimate connection between the agrarian problem and the general unsatisfactory political state of things in Spain was plainly stated by Señor Baldomero Argente in the *Tiempo*, of 3rd March, 1921:

Whichever may be the national problem taken as a starting point for discussion, all reasoning leads to the inevitable conclusion that agrarian reform must be tackled first if other problems are also to be solved. . . . This is an indispensable premise for finding the solution of our financial problems. . . . Although agrarian reform benefits greatly the working classes, it is not demanded solely for that reason nor in their exclusive interest, but in the name of patriotism and in the interest of small landowners themselves. An increase in the number of small landowners is the best defence against revolutionary movements. There has been no revolution which was not initiated or supported by miserable peasants, and of which the fundamental aim was not the division of the land, from the French Revolution to those in Mexico and Russia. One can easily see how urgent it is in Spain. It is required for the sake of social peace, and the stability of the social and political institutions of our country. The political decomposition from which we suffer is one consequence of the state of the countryside, where respect for persons and property does not emanate from a spontaneous sense of social solidarity, but depends on the employment of force. That political decomposition carries with it the weakness of all Governments; these will not be able to resist and turn urban turbulency into its proper channels until they can rely on the support of a numerous and contented rural middle class. All Spanish political parties have talked about the need of undertaking agrarian reform; all of them, even those of the extreme Right. But not one of them

seriously thinks of undertaking it; not one of them, not even those of the extreme Left.

Señor Argente was writing in a newspaper which was endeavouring to "sit on the fence," or else he would not have reproached the parties of the extreme Left for something of which no criticism was justified. Those parties have never yet had the slightest chance of holding the reins of Government.

As Señor Argente stated, even the parties of the extreme Right (meaning the parties which defend, and are largely guided by the Church) have been compelled to admit the existence in Spain of an agrarian problem which can no longer be ignored. Having reached that conclusion, just as the Church has been compelled to recognise that Labour agitation and organisation are also realities in modern Spain, the clever Churchmen who influence Spanish Governments made haste to bend before the wave of agrarian demands instead of standing against them until overwhelmed. They have taken steps to turn the movement as far as possible into a new source of profit and influence to themselves. In a country with a low level of education, and very defective communications between its many peoples, such as Spain, all organisation outside official circles is very difficult and, indeed, still in its infancy. The Church, with its representative in every village and hamlet, is in a very favourable position for any work of propaganda or organisation; it can set a new scheme going with much greater rapidity than is possible to any private individual or even groups of individuals. The "Sindicatos Católicos" ("Catholic Trades Unions")

of the towns were the reply of the Church to the simple "Sindicatos" organised by workmen or their leaders. It was natural that similar organisations should receive its support in country districts as a counter-blast to the secular unions, which were being formed all over Spain. The initiator of Catholic agricultural unions, "the apostle of the movement," as he was called by the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, is Señor Antonio Monedero. This gentleman's name was the first one on a manifesto issued on 5th May, 1912, to the people of Palencia, an important agricultural district, inviting them to a Catholic agrarian meeting. That meeting was poorly attended; but the idea found many partisans, and various unions were founded in Castille, so that in 1914 Señor Monedero was able to organise the Catholic Agrarian Confederation of Old Castille. He toured the whole country to propagate his ideas; the National Catholic Agrarian Federation came into existence two years later. The clerical newspaper, *El Debate*, tells us that the original Federation had in 1914, 12 local or district federations, 500 unions and 150,000 members, which had increased at the end of 1920 to 58 federations, 5,000 unions and 600,000 members. Its insurances against fire grew from policies totalling £12,000 in the first year to £480,000 for the first eleven months of 1921. The bold statement is made that:

the Confederation, even outside the circle of its membership, has succeeded in changing popular ideas in Spain regarding the right to hold property, and the duties of persons who are favoured by fortune. In this sense, the

Federation's work, not being revolutionary, but evolutionary, has been that of radical reform.

In view of the consensus of opinion in Spain as to the continued seriousness of the agrarian problem in that country, this claim seems as exaggerated as are other claims made by the same authority from time to time on kindred matters.

The objects of the unions forming the C.N.C.A. (to give its abbreviated title, formed by the initials of its name in Spanish) are very much the same as those of the ordinary rural trades unions, if the interests of the Church be put on one side. It would undoubtedly go a long way towards solving many problems if any large area of Spanish territory could be organised and worked as these unions work it where and when possible. Where the members of the C.N.C.A. score over their rivals is in having members, patrons, and sympathisers who belong to a richer class than the agricultural labourer or small farmer, and are consequently able to find the capital needed for their various activities. The Navarre Federation has a capital of £24,000 and had a turnover of £1,152,442 in one year; the latter figure probably refers to the business done by its members. The chief business of the Federation appears to be the purchase and distribution on co-operative lines of the fertilisers and machinery required by its members. In the year in question the Navarre Federation sold £120,143 worth of superphosphates to its members, making a profit of a little over £2,000. Some of them have savings banks and make loans to individuals or local unions. At the date of its balance sheet published in

November, 1921, the Burgos Federation showed £11,206 out on loan; its unions were 161, members 9,850, and it had eight co-operative bakeries and seventy-four savings banks with deposits totalling £35,568. Now and then a union buys a farm and divides it into small holdings of about six or seven acres to applicants chosen by lot from amongst its members. The acquisition and programme of division of one such farm bought by a union in the Palencia Federation serves to show the idea underlying the work of the unions; the Hontoria de Cerrato union bought a farm of 445 acres at the price of £7,000, lent by the Palencia Federation. It was hoped to transfer part of this to a mortgage through the National Mortgage Bank, in order not to lock up so much capital. Fifty holdings were to be measured out, and the price per holding was expected to be from £48 to £60; about fifty acres would remain over as property of the union, which would probably plant trees on it. The peasants would pay the purchase money by instalments, the length of which depended on whether the expected mortgage was obtained or not. After paying off the purchase money the occupier would own the land; but it would be a condition of the contract that he could only re-sell it to the union. From the figures given it would appear that the union would lose at least 50 per cent. on the transaction, even if the peasant occupiers paid cash; so some mistake seems to have been made. The land was dry, but the seller, a civil engineer, undertook to carry out at his own cost irrigation works for some 200 acres. An outsider might think (knowing the

value of such promises and engagements in Spain) that the union would have been better advised to wait until the land had been so improved. The savings bank of the union would make advances to the buyers of the land for the acquisition of seed, fertilisers and harness.

At the end of May, 1921, a Bill was presented to Congress, the object of which was to facilitate and hasten the subdivision of large landed estates into small holdings. This is, as we have seen, one of the express objects of the Catholic unions. Of course, the authority of a law and the superior financial resources at the disposal of the Government gave the latter a great advantage over any private organisation. The provisions of the Bill appear to an impartial foreign observer to have exactly the same defects as those of many other well-intentioned Bills which have become law in Spain. For instance, it states that amongst the classes of land subject to expropriation and colonisation are "abandoned, uncultivated, or deficiently worked private estates," which are declared to include "lands suitable for agriculture and grazing, and wooded lands which are solely devoted to the breeding of fighting bulls or treated as game preserves . . . park lands of over 190 acres in extent within one boundary, or estates of more than 1,250 acres belonging to one owner within any one township." Various other categories of land are also mentioned, but does anybody who knows Spain imagine that lots like those quoted are ever likely to be interfered with? To hear petitions for the subdivision of estates included in the Bill, the "National

Colonization Institute " is to be created and will take the place of the former Board with a somewhat similar name. The properties to be expropriated were to be paid for in National Perpetual Bonds, receiving 4 per cent. interest, to be issued by the State for that purpose. The sum issued is not to be greater than the amount on which the said interest can be paid out of an allowance in the first year's Budget of £160,000, which is to be £320,000 in subsequent years, or, say, a total issue of £8,000,000. (The cheerful optimism of the Minister who introduced the Bill may also be seen in the permission which it gives to the Ministry to accept *donations* of land for colonisation purposes !) Provision is made for colonisation of three kinds, namely: family estates, collective associations, and agricultural colonies. All requisite deeds, titles and other documents, such as the articles of association of co-operative farms, contracts of sale and purchase or exchange, etc., prepared by the Institute, were to be exempt from all taxation.

The new Colonisation Bill was to take the place of a measure tending towards the same purpose, which had proved quite ineffectual as regards satisfying the peasants' demands. The original law bears the date of 30th August, 1907. On 24th May, 1919, Señor Antonio Maura, then Premier in a Conservative Cabinet, issued a decree granting to small holdings formed by the voluntary action of landowners who had subdivided their estates in that way, equal privileges with the holdings formed under the law of 1907. So actively (*sic*) did the old Colonisation Board attend to its dutes, that in April, 1921, barely

two years after Señor Maura's decree, the Board printed it as a booklet, including the regulations " which must be borne in mind by the large or small landowners who may wish to know them in order to secure the benefits of the law." They were invited to apply for the booklet at the Board's offices in Madrid.

There are three distinct ways of setting about land reform in Spain, which have their respective advocates in the different political parties. One way is that of forced expropriation after a declaration by technically competent persons that the owner of the land is neglecting it. Another is the voluntary transfer of land for its subdivision into small holdings, the State or a bank advancing the purchase money. (The Bill of May, 1921, referred to above, will have been found to have adopted both this and the first way.) The third is the limitation by law of the owner's rights. Señor Baldomero Argente, whom we have already quoted, considers all these methods equally impossible to put into practice. His remedy for the Spanish agrarian problem is an adaptation to Spain of Mr. Lloyd George's system of land taxation introduced in England in 1910, and improved on in Australia in 1911. Señor Argente declares that the only practicable way of effecting reform is to modify the basis of the Spanish land tax, by fixing the tax on the productive capacity of the land as shown by its annual rent, instead of on what is produced by it, as is now done. Señor Argente says :

In this way land reform would be carried out gently and slowly, but surely and with good results. As soon as our parties are ready to tackle this problem in real

sincerity, this formula will force itself upon them as it is the only one which is workable in the present state of society at this period of civilisation. It does not matter that reform be slow; not haste, but a right direction is the most important thing in the steps which may be taken.

Under the old law a number of experimental farms were established, and they still exist. A great difference of opinion seems to prevail concerning their methods and general usefulness to the agriculturists, for whose benefit they were created. I do not feel myself in a position to express an opinion about them, since details of their work are not published widely enough for me to be able to incorporate them in this summary of the conditions of life in Spain to-day.

One difficulty which presents itself to a writer who wishes to give information about Spain to English readers, is the question of the general meaning to be attached to certain words. In England we usually employ the word "province" to describe a whole Spanish district like Andalusia, Catalonia, and so forth; we are apt to be puzzled when reading of the "province," of places like Madrid, Barcelona and Seville. On the other hand, a Spanish newspaper will use the one word, such as Madrid, to signify the city at one moment—that is to say, the territory situated inside the municipal boundaries—and at another moment to mean the whole rural district, for want of a better word to describe it. There are forty-nine such "provinces" or counties in Spain. In what we should call nowadays the province, but was in older times the kingdom of Navarre, Señor Rafael Aizpuru,

in a lecture on the land problem given in the Madrid Atheneum, on 9th December, 1921, states that there were two main divisions—the characteristics of which differed greatly. In what the lecturer described as the hill district, the agrarian problem is not so acute. Each valley has its own land organisation. In the Roncal valley, for example, grazing and breeding predominate. The valley is divided into seven townships, united into an old style community, administered by a Board composed of three representatives of each township, whose rules are always obeyed. There are four kinds of real property there, namely: the common (for grazing, timber, etc.), the reserves (concessions for use of wooded lands), the enclosures (rights of usage granted by the Board to the townships), and individual estates acquired by prescription, and subject to conditions due to the land having originally formed part of the common land.

The Baztan Valley, in the hill district of Navarre, forms an almost independent republic in agrarian matters. There are no boundaries between the lands of the different villages, and almost all the land is in commons; the right of pasture is also common to all. Cutting of timber is allowed by the Board of Administration in exchange for certain fees. On the other hand, in the river district of Navarre the agrarian problem is very acute. The reason for this is certainly not the existence of large uncultivated estates, because the land is very much subdivided. The growing eagerness to cultivate it on account of the greater requirements of modern life is the chief cause of the trouble. The conflict is made

worse because the municipalities have sold their common land in order to provide for other needs. The lands thus held by private persons are called *corralizas* (enclosures); the people of Navarre wish to recover possession of them. Some of the sales were legally and properly made, but to others objections have been justifiably taken. In some cases, not the absolute ownership, but only a right of user was sold. In Navarre the people give the name of *intrusos* (intruders) to the descendants of natives of the country who obtained the right to plough, but whose descendants now claim ownership of the land. It may be said that nine out of ten families in Navarre own land. There will be no agrarian problem in the province as soon as means are found to buy back for the municipalities the common land, which has been bought from them or otherwise acquired by private individuals.

As a contrast to this state of affairs in Navarre, I may mention the conditions ruling in Andalusia, where we have seen that the peasants wish to recover the control over land which they had when the Moors governed that part of Spain; and I may also give a statement of the land problem as it shows itself in the centre of Spain, for which purpose I shall take the "province" of Valladolid. Señor Marino Medina, in a lecture delivered at Madrid, on 2nd December, 1921, said that it was necessary to study simultaneously the problem of the distribution of the land and that of production. The province or county of Valladolid has an area of nearly 2,019,000 acres, of which 67 per cent. is cultivated, another 21 per cent. fit for cultiva-

tion, and the remainder waste land. There are few large estates, the biggest being about 7,500 acres. On the other hand, there is scarcely any common land; most of the soil belongs to medium and small farmers. Speaking generally, the large and medium sized estates were acquired by usurping common land. There are about equal numbers of peasant owners who work themselves, and of farmers who employ labour. The third group, which is purely a landlord one, has increased with the growing demand for land since the war. Small holdings, in the opinion of the lecturer, must be accompanied by co-operation if success is to be attained; because intensive cultivation is impossible without capital in some form. He recommends the longest possible leases in order to induce the tenant-farmer to love his land instead of exhausting it; a system of profit-sharing to increase wages; and the application to agriculture through mutual insurance societies of the Spanish equivalent of our Workmen's Compensation Acts.

The General Workers' Union ("Union General de Trabajadores") represents the moderate elements in the Spanish working classes, and is frequently in strong opposition to the ideas and propaganda of the National Labour Federation ("Confederación Nacional del Trabajo"), which is dominated by those holding extreme socialistic, and even communist, views. This union of the moderates was permitted to hold a Congress of local unions in the provinces of Andalusia and Extremadura, that is to say, of the districts where the land question is most acute and threatening. The Congress was held in Jaen, on 14th, 15th and

16th October, 1920, and not only the programme itself of matters for discussion, but also the order in which those matters were placed, have a certain significance :

(1) How to make Governments respect the liberty of the people.
(2) How to organise the labour of strangers so that the latter should not compete with local labourers.
(3) Maximum working day.
(4) Minimum wage.
(5) Unemployment.
(6) Reduction of cost of living.
(7) Workmen's insurance against accidents.
(8) Contracts of hire ; and how to make the employers carry them out.
(9) Socialisation of land.

The matter which proved most interesting to the delegates was the second item on the programme, or the question of casual labour. Several speakers declared themselves in favour of prohibiting all casual labour by men from other parts of the country, and alleged that masters used that labour to defeat and destroy the local unions. The discussion only dealt with the question as far as it concerned members of unions, as the delegates could suggest no efficacious remedies against the employment of non-union labour. It was decided to allow the importation of union members from other districts, on condition that payment by results was abolished, that the imported man's behaviour towards the local workers was described in his book of membership or on a special

certificate, and that the time worked outside his own district was also noted.

Another matter to which much importance was given was the last item, or land socialisation. A resolution was unanimously approved which declared against "the fatal system of distribution or small holdings," which it was agreed could only delay the advent of land communism, the ideal to be kept always in mind. One delegate complained that the resolution provided no temporary and immediate remedy for the existing state of things, such as might be found in the creation of agricultural co-operative societies. To solve the problem of unemployment the Congress called for the formation of local committees, including one representative of the Government, who should, however, be a local man. His duty would be to investigate whether land was efficiently cultivated. Decisions should be executed through the municipalities, even if they implied compulsory expropriation of estates in favour of groups of agricultural labourers. All arable land not under cultivation should be let to the unions at a rent not exceeding 8 per cent. of the declared value of first-class land, 7 per cent. in the case of second-class land, and 5 per cent. for the remainder.

The Congress was the first of its kind, and *its resolutions laid the basis of the agrarian reform demanded by a national majority of Spanish agricultural and other land workers.* It was also decided to form, under the auspices of the General Workers' Union, a National Federation of workers on the land. Need I say that no reforms have been introduced since then.

The Military Directorate has not so far taken a single step towards solving this very pressing problem. It is extremely unlikely that they will do so, since the leaders of the movement are of the same type as those who have made the lot of the Spanish smallholder so unhappy. Moreover, if they carried through the reforms demanded by the people, Primo de Rivera's generals and most powerful supporters would deprive themselves of incomes for which they do not have to work; a powerful incentive to resistance by proud aristocrats and lazy landlords.

Meanwhile, the gaping sore of agrarian unrest remains. The solution of the problem lies with the people themselves; and in regard to land they have shown themselves to be more restive than to any other problem. The *mañana* of revolt grows nearer the more pressing the agrarian question becomes; and the agrarian problem becomes more pressing with the passage of every day and week.

CHAPTER VIII

CATALAN SEPARATIST MOVEMENT

El principio de la salud está en conocer la enfermedad. CERVANTES.

(An understanding of the disease is the first step to a cure.)

SPANISH GOVERNMENTS, too busy with personal intrigues and the maintenance of themselves in power to pay much attention to the requirements of communities deprived of a great part of the influence which they used to enjoy in local matters especially, have contributed very largely to the re-awakening of desires and pretensions, which had to a great extent died out, owing to the acceptance by their former advocates and champions of a centralised form of government and administration which took no account of local differences. Prolonged neglect by the National Government of those parts of the country which did not originally form part of the old kingdom of Castille, and were added to it in various ways during the process of the unification of the country, but had never become completely identified with it in sentiment and customs, naturally caused a revival of the old Nationalist feelings and aspirations. The more important of those districts, situated in the north-eastern and south-eastern portions of Spain,

had become the chief industrial regions ; their interests were very different from the interests of the agriculturists of the central and southern parts of the country. New and pressing local problems, the importance of which was never realised or understood by the politicians of Madrid, called urgently for solution ; and the ever more prosperous manufacturers and merchants of those regions grew more and more dissatisfied with the wastefulness and profligacy of the central authorities.

The greatest differences of temperament and outlook were those between Catalonia and old Spain. Barcelona, which had been an important city in the Middle Ages, regained a large part of its lost influence and prestige, and became the finest city in the Peninsula. Its princes of industry and commerce grumbled incessantly at the mismanagement of their affairs by the National Government ; and protested often and loudly against the system which made their region the treasure from which was drawn an undue proportion of the money wasted in maladministration at home, and in rash and sterile adventures, such as the conquest of the Riff district of Morocco. Business men usually keep aloof from the minor intrigues of politicians, and a sympathetic handling of their grievances would have prevented these from ever being a serious menace to the unity of the State ; but the scant attention given to them by the Central Government created a local atmosphere favourable to the renaissance, which has taken place and developed so strongly in recent years, of the old feeling of separate nationality.

It should not be forgotten that Catalonia did not form part of the Spanish State until the beginning of the fifteenth century. When some Gothic cavaliers drove the Moors under Gamir from Barcelona in 805 A.D., Ludovic the Pious, King of Aquitaine, made Bara, a Goth of Narbonne, the first Count of Barcelona. This was the chief city of the district lying between Murcia in the west and the River Rhone in the east, where a Phœnician traveller, quoted by Avienus, found in 500 B.C. what the latter calls the *Etnos iberica*, or the descendants of the Ligurians of Provence, who had conquered all that region, including the Balearic Islands. Later, the western limit of the territory was marked by the present province of Valencia. Within those narrower limits one language prevailed. The first documents still extant which are written completely in Catalán, date from the eleventh century, which is itself a remarkable fact, if we remember that in those early times Latin was almost universally used by writers; but Catalán words appear incorporated in much earlier Latin documents, and the language was probably first spoken in the fifth or sixth century of our era.

Bara, the first Count of Barcelona, was found guilty of treason, and exiled to Rouen in 826 A.D., and was followed by Bernat, also of Narbonne, who did so well that Ludovic called him to his side as chamberlain, and Vifredo was appointed in his place. The latter's son, Vifredo II., who had been educated in Flanders, returned to Barcelona and killed the Frenchman, Salamo, who had been made count in his place. He then fought valiantly against the

Moors and consolidated his position, which he retained until his death in 912. He was buried in the Monastery of Ripoll, built, as were many other churches, during his reign. Although not always through the direct line, his dynasty reigned for many years. Ramon Berenguer, who succeeded in 1035, was called the Wise. It was he who convoked the first *Corts Generals*, or Parliament, in Barcelona, which drew up a code of 175 laws called the *Usatges de Barcelona*. Ramon Berenguer built the cathedral there, and was buried in it in 1076. The counts of Barcelona had become the princes of Catalonia and were the overlords of the counts of Sardinia, Gerona and other places. Ramon Berenguer's grandson, who was the third of the name, became Count of Provence by marrying the daughter of his predecessor in that title. He took the island of Majorca from the Moors, and the kings of Tortosa, Valencia and Lérida were all his vassals. He reigned fifty years and then resigned in favour of his sons, of whom one became Count of Barcelona and the other Count of Provence, and having joined the Order of the Knights-Templars, he died in his voluntary retirement in the Poorhouse at Barcelona in 1131. His son, Ramon Berenguer IV, married Petronilla, daughter of Ramiro, King of Aragon, who brought him that kingdom as dowry. His son, who succeeded him, Alfonso I, therefore placed the higher title first, and was called King of Aragon and Count of Barcelona. He married the daughter of the King of Castille and also added to his domains the earldoms of Rosselló, Sardinia and Pallares, which on his decease passed to his younger

sons, Pedro I, his heir, succeeding to the kingdom of Aragon and earldom of Barcelona. Wishing to help his brother-in-law, the Count of Toulouse, Pedro made war against the French, led by Symon de Monfort, and died in the battle of Muret in 1213. One of his daughters, Constanza, married the King of Sicily.

Pedro's grandson, Pedro II, quarrelled with Charles of France over Sicily, and the latter invaded Catalonia, but his army died of pestilence and "of flies which issued from the body of St. Narcissus, bisp." His son, Alfonso II, captured the island of Minorca from the Moors. He died in 1291 and was succeeded by his relative, the King of Sicily, who handed that kingdom over to his brother Frederic, and himself became King of Aragon and Count of Barcelona as Jaime II. His grandson, Pedro III, definitely added Majorca, Rosselló (Roussillon) and Cerdanya to Aragon after quelling rebellions by their rulers. His daughter, Eleonor, married Juan, King of Castille, and when his successions failed after two sons had followed him on the throne, a committee of nine persons, three from each district, Aragon, Castille and Barcelona, elected as king of the joint realm, Fernando I, son of Eleonor and Juan, who died in 1416.

Although the real unification of the Spanish monarchy was made by Fernando II, who ascended the throne in 1479, drove the Moors out of Granada, and conquered Navarre, Naples and Algiers, Catalonia's separate influence may be said to have disappeared with the decision taken at Caspe on 25th

June, 1412. Her economic prosperity vanished with the Turkish conquest of Constantinople and the discovery of America, for Catalonia found herself shut in by pirates and barbarians, and was not allowed to participate in the trade with America. Fernando II unified Spain, but destroyed all popular liberties such as were traditional in Catalonia, and the final blow came when Philip II made Madrid the capital of the country. At the beginning of the eighteenth century Catalonia had lost many of her people, and most of her trade and shipping; official functionaries and trade routes had changed from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic as the Americas grew in importance. Long and costly wars and wasteful administration had been all against Catalonia's prosperity, already undermined by the change in the direction of world trade. Political ideas no longer favoured small states, but rather the absorption of the small by the large, and centralisation of everything was the ruling tendency and passion. Soon afterwards Catalonia appears to have been effaced completely from Spanish administration and politics, for not a single Catalan was to be found at the head of either army or fleet, province or colony, nor were any found on the councils which made war and peace.

Whether it be creditable or discreditable, or merely the effect of natural laws, the fact remains that the inhabitants of Catalonia themselves accepted the situation and lost to a large extent the feeling of their own separate nationhood. The Catalan language almost disappeared from the cities, and even a lower

class person considered it an insult to receive a letter written in Catalan. (*Vide* "La Nacionalitat Catalana," by E. Prat de la Riba, published in 1906.) The Catalan poet Boscán and the writer Pujades wrote in Castillian Spanish, and Feliu de la Peña began his *Anales* in Catalan, but finished them in Spanish. Driven out of intellectual circles the Catalan language, like the Erse in Ireland, was only to be found in lonely parts of the countryside, just as were the old popular traditions and sentiments. The part played by Catalonia in the War of the Spanish Succession, when the Catalans backed Charles of Austria against Philip of Anjou, was the final blow; after the surrender of Barcelona to Philip's forces in 1714, all Catalonia's remaining autonomy and privileges were destroyed by the Royal Decree, known as that of Nueva Planta, in 1716. Even so, the spirit of the people showed itself through all the trouble of those times, as in the last session of the last Corts or Parliament held at Barcelona in 1702 (and presided over by the King, who afterwards destroyed it) the Catalan representatives claimed, and obtained, the right to trade with America.

Intellectual movements usually begin in the higher ranks of society and only slowly penetrate to the lower strata; some of them have not completed their effect on these latter before other and newer movements, perhaps quite contradictory to the previous ones, begin to show themselves. The language and traditions of Catalonia had disappeared from all but the peasant class, so when things had reached that stage it was natural and logical for a reaction to set

in. The countryside fed the towns not only with daily bread, but with human brain and muscle, and so assisted the circulation and renovation of ideas affecting the whole community. When many years of inept administration and gross misgovernment had again aroused in the hearts of Catalans a feeling that all was not well and that reform was necessary, the old love of liberty and self-dependence revived, and with it the remembrance that those responsible for the poverty and woes of Catalonia belonged, after all, to a people which was not that born and bred in the province, but foreign to it, and which had usurped in times past the old liberties and rights of the Catalans. This remembrance found a sympathetic response from the newly-arrived peasants, who had always adhered to the old traditions. The fermentation of these ideas produced the first ardent spirits who aspired to redeem their native land and restore its liberties to its sons.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century signs were not wanting that a Catalan renaissance was overdue, and could not long be delayed. In 1833 Buenaventura Carlos Aribau published an "Ode to my Native Land," which, although written in Castillian, was a hymn of love and praise in honour of that Catalonia which had become in material matters little more than a mere geographical expression. Aribau published the ode in his newspaper *La Patria*, one of his collaborators in which was Rubio y Ors, who alone wrote his articles in the Catalan language, and one of whose principal works was "Lo Gayter de Llobregat." That others of less fame followed this

example is made evident by the fact that in 1858 Antonio de Bofarull published "Los Trobadors nous," which reviewed the work of several writers. By this time writers in Catalan had begun to have influence in the city of Barcelona, and the Juegos or, in Catalan, Jochs Florals—a kind of Catalan Eisteddfod—were restored in 1857 in the Catalan language. The first newspaper printed in Catalan bore as title the words which had such a vogue little more than a generation later—*Un Troç de Paper* (A Scrap of Paper). The *Diari Catalá* first appeared in 1879. In parallel movement with the newspapers, new Catalanist societies and associations were formed, not all of which were successful, because in a movement of that kind there must always be differences of opinion, both as regards its ultimate object and the means of attaining that object. Vicente Almirall was the first real Catalan Federalist; he founded the society *La Jove Catalunya* in 1887, which saw the foundation of the *Centre Escolar Catalanista*. The now famous *Lliga de Catalunya* followed in the years immediately afterwards, and then came many others, most of which were combined in 1892 in the *Unió Catalanista*, which approved and voted the famous "Bases de Manresa." In the same year, 1892, the priest Joseph Torras y Bagés drew attention to the work of his most eminent countrymen of Catalonia in his studies published under the title of "La Tradició Catalana."

A free Catalonia was the dream of the first apostles of the new doctrine, hence the name "Separatists," given to-day to all Catalan Home Rulers, whether

they are really such or merely advocates of self-government in one or other of the many political systems, of which choice might be made. That dream was publicly expressed in the speech of Picó y Campamar when he opened, as President, the Juegos Florales of 1892, and in the propaganda carried on at that time by Rubio y Lluch in *Rivista Catalana*. The doctrine had many adherents in the students' association already mentioned, the *Centre Escolar Catalanista*. Durán y Ventosa, in his speech when opening the course of law there on 23rd November, 1889, defined nationalism, and spoke of "the differences which exist between the *nations* which form the Spanish State." The same thing had been said by Puig y Cadafalch when opening the session, 1889–90, a few days before. Prat de la Riba followed on the same lines in his presidential speech in 1890, when he declared that many already saw that Spain was a state—a geographical expression—but not a nation. The two leaders last mentioned, with Galissá and Moliné, took over in 1891 the editing of *La Renaixensa*, on which Durán y Ventosa was already working.

The first battle to secure control of the large corporate bodies of Catalonia was fought and won by these leaders in the Atheneum of Barcelona in 1897, when Prat de la Riba gave a lecture on "Catalan Nationality a Fact." The scandals and disclosures of the American War of 1898 gave a great impetus to the movement, which was now complicated by unrest amongst the workmen of Barcelona and other towns, and the anarchist propaganda which led to the well-

remembered bomb in the Liceo Theatre, at Barcelona, in 1893. The first bomb of the series had been thrown in 1892.

Although it would be totally unfair and untrue to lay the responsibility for the different terrorist movements in Barcelona at the door of the leaders of the Catalan movement—on the contrary, they have always maintained that if given Home Rule they would have no great difficulty in removing the causes of the disorders of the last two decades in the manufacturing districts of Catalonia—it cannot but be admitted that their cause has lost nothing from the publicity thereby attained, and from the attention given to the affairs of Barcelona. The authorities in Madrid at last realised that something must be done. In the usual way they talked and promised a great deal, but did nothing. General Polavieja returned from the Philippines with a good reputation, and in 1898 he met prominent Catalans and promised certain concessions if, as was then expected, he soon became a member of the Government. He did in fact form part of the Silvela Ministry in the following year, but, whether from indolence or because he was genuinely unable to carry his points in face of the opposition of his colleagues, ended by doing nothing. The Catalan leader, Durán y Bas, was in the same Cabinet, and during his stay there various Catalans were appointed mayors of cities and towns in Catalonia. A Señor Roberts was made Mayor of Barcelona. The latter found himself opposed by a large majority of the members of the city council, so that he could do nothing, and he soon decided to resign.

Durán y Bas also resigned after a short time his seat in the Cabinet. The reactionaries had won again and put a stop to progress. Certain new budgetary and other economic proposals were made which were very obnoxious to Catalonia and strongly resisted, disorders occurring. The result was the usual Spanish remedy of severe repression. The Catalans took their revenge by singing "Els Segadors"—the national hymn of Catalonia—before the French admiral visiting the city, at a *fête* in the Palace of Fine Arts, and in hissing and preventing the singing of the Spanish national anthem.

Prat de la Riba had not attained his twentieth year when he prepared the speech which he delivered at the *Centre Escolar Catalanista* in 1890. Advancing years have not changed his views; he is still the most ardent defender, with Rovira y Virgili, of Catalan aspirations. These include the formation of Greater Catalunya, which comprises Catalonia proper, Valencia, the Roussillon and the Balearic Islands; but it is somewhat mournfully admitted in Rovira y Virgili's book, "El Nacionalismo Catalan," that the Catalan tongue has practically disappeared from the French portion of that territory, what remains being a mere *patois*, in which many French words are used. In Valencia, on the other hand, local sentiment has again showed a tendency to veer round in favour of union with the former earldom of Barcelona, and a great sensation was caused in 1908 when the poet, Miguel Durán, a Valencian by birth, declared himself a supporter of that ideal, and frankly called himself a Catalan. The well-known writer, Gabriel Alomar,

wrote from Palma de Majorca in approval of Durán's speech, but great indignation was shown in most of the comments made by Valencian newspapers.

After the split caused by the Polavieja-Silvela attempt at compromise, already mentioned, a Nationalist candidate was presented in the ensuing general elections in 1899, but was defeated. It was then that Puig y Cadafalch, Durán y Ventosa and Cambó made themselves prominent in Catalan affairs, the last being a mere youth. The Polaviejistas formed the *Unió Regionalista*, and the dissidents created the *Centre Nacional Català*, of which the soul and guiding spirit was Prat de la Riba. Both parties combined in the elections of 1901, and to the surprise of every one put four Catalanist deputies at the top of the poll, the other persons elected being Pi y Margall and A. Lerroux, Republicans, and Maristany, Monarchist. The *Lliga Regionalista* was formed in consequence to reunite the party; a victory in the municipal elections was gained in the following year. Madrid began to be disturbed by the development of Catalanism, and Lerroux was accused of being merely an emissary of Moret sent to injure its prospects. There was a general movement throughout Spain favourable to republicanism at that time, and the republican elements in Catalonia accused the Catalan party of being reactionary, *bourgeois* and separatist ("El Nacionalismo Catalan," p. 142). A new *Union Republicana* was formed under Nicolás Salmerón, and was well received by the workers, so that when, in the provincial elections of 1903, the *Lliga* made the mistake of allying itself with the Ultramontanes

against the opinion of its Liberal adherents, the Republicans won, and repeated their victory in the general elections of the following year. Afterwards the policy of the *Lliga* became still more conservative and dynastic, which provoked another split in the organisation.

King Alfonso XIII visited Barcelona in 1904, accompanied by the then Prime Minister, Maura. At a reception held in the City Hall, Cambó, who was at that time a city councillor, made a speech of welcome, in which he reminded the king of Catalonia's aspirations for autonomy. The Radicals soon after that left the *Lliga*, and founded a weekly paper called *Lo Poble Català*, which became a daily in 1906. The *Centre Nacional Republicá* was formed at the end of the same year and soon acquired importance. A declaration in favour of Liberal ideas made in 1904 by Martí y Juliá, then President of the Permanent Committee of the *Unió Catalanista*, was equivalent to a cancellation of the *Bases de Manresa* as the programme of the party, but this did not prevent the decay of the *Unió*. The real struggle in Barcelona was now between the Catalanist and the Republican ideals. The *Lliga* won again in the municipal elections of 1905 when a caricature in *Cu-Cut!* led to the burning by Spanish Army officers of the furniture of the Catalanist organ, *La Veu de Catalunya*, on 25th November. All Catalans, except Lerroux, protested strongly against this outrage. The Government merely declared a state of siege and suspended both publications. At the trial of the officers concerned they were acquitted "for lack of proof of identity

with the assailants," and various Spanish garrisons hastened to congratulate that of Barcelona on its action, as did the then captain-general, General Luque; he was soon afterwards made Minister for War. The net result of all the agitation was the introduction by Moret into Congress of the Bill afterwards known as the Law of Jurisdiction, an infamous measure which was not surpassed in cynicism by the most oppressive measures ever introduced, even in Russia or Turkey. It placed civilians completely under the heel of the armed forces of the country.

The principal object of this Law of Jurisdiction was to suppress Catalanism and its propaganda, but as it was made applicable to the whole of Spain, the rest of the country has suffered even more than Catalonia, because, apart from the terrorism which has disgraced Barcelona, the Catalans are amongst the most law-abiding inhabitants of the Peninsula. Nevertheless, one or two examples of its working in Catalonia may be given. Luis Manau was accused of speaking against the Army at a public meeting, and although all the other speakers, and *even the police sergeant officially present*, supported his denial that he had uttered the words attributed to him, he was condemned and imprisoned on the evidence of *one witness*. José Baró censured in his paper the private conduct of some officers at public festivities without any reference to their military character, and was sentenced to imprisonment. Another journalist, Pous y Pagés, a friend of his, expressed sympathy for him, and was sentenced to two months' imprison-

ment, a sentence which was *trebled* by the Supreme Army and Navy Court *when he appealed against it!* (*Vide* "El Nacionalismo Catalan," by A. Rovira y Virgili.)

These excesses had the result of turning the Republican leader, Salmerón, into an ardent Catalanist, and at Gerona in 1906 the *Solidaridad* was proclaimed of the Regionalist, Union Republicana, Federalist, Integralist and National Left parties with the *Unió Catalanista*. The result was that a combined manifestation by those parties in Barcelona on 20th May, 1906, was attended by over 200,000 people, and in the parliamentary elections of April, 1907, the *Solidaridad* won forty-one out of forty-four seats in Catalonia, Lerroux being defeated. In the ensuing Parliament Maura presented a Bill to grant powers of local administration throughout Spain, by permitting the existence of "Mancomunidades," or voluntary unions of provincial legislatures (practically the same as our county councils), with the right to ask for control of some local matters hitherto dealt with by the National Government. The Catalan deputy, Suñol, made a speech against the Bill, on the plea that it conceded so little that it would be better to refuse that little, and hold out for the grant of more complete Home Rule. On the other hand, Cambó expressed the view that it was better to take what was offered and then try to obtain more. His speech secured the passing of the Bill; but the Government fell soon afterwards, and the measure never got through the Senate.

Meanwhile, although the *Lliga* had triumphed for a time, many Republican and other members of the

Solidaridad saw that its attitude was harmful to Liberalism, and the Catalan masses grew discontented. In 1908 the Republican Left Wing of the party organised separate meetings and, being supported with ulterior motives by all the anti-Catalanist elements, won three out of four bye-elections in Catalonia. The *Lliga* having accepted the support of the Carlists, the most reactionary party in Spain, the Republicans won again in the municipal elections of 1909, and the *Union Federal Nacionalista Republicana* was formed in 1910. After the death of Salmerón and the revolt in Barcelona of July, 1909, local dissensions caused the Catalan problem to lose importance for a time, but during this period of depression a motion was presented in the "Diputación," or provincial legislature of Barcelona, to declare the desire of that body that the four similar bodies in Catalonia should be united in one only in order to represent that region. Durán y Ventosa followed with more concrete proposals, and both motions were referred to a special committee, which studied them and reported in favour of the idea on 30th March, 1911. In the following July representatives of all four local authorities met and appointed a commission to draw up the bases of a constitution, which was done, and its bases approved by the four legislatures. A deputation saw the Prime Minister, Canalejas, on 8th December, who received the idea favourably, it being also approved by all the leaders of the parliamentary Opposition parties except Maura, who, as already stated, had agreed to something similar not long before. Many important alterations were made by

the Government in the draft presented by the Catalan deputation, and the Bill was introduced into Congress in July, 1912; Canalejas was assassinated in Madrid in the following November.

His successor, Count Romanones, promised his support, and the Bill reached the Senate, and its first clause was approved there, but Garcia Prieto, the present Marquis of Alhucemas, resigned from the Government, and Parliament was dissolved. A large public meeting in Barcelona in October, 1913, pressed for the Bill, but Romanones was defeated soon after the opening of Congress. He was followed by Dato, who dropped the Bill, but induced the King to sign an Order in Council, allowing the mancommunism or union of local councils, and the "Mancomunidad Catalana" was formed, being opened in 6th April, 1914, with a speech by Enrique Prat de la Riba, whose frank advocacy of Catalan autonomy aroused fierce protests in Madrid. Whilst this was happening the *Union Federal Nacionalista Republicana* had lost all prestige and semblance of unity owing to its flirtations with Socialists and Communists. Its best elements seceded under Francisco Layret and Marcelino Domingo to form the *Bloc Republicano Autonomista*. Santiago Alba and Romanones fought the *Lliga* in 1916, and sought the assistance of the U.F.N.R. in the elections of that year. In Barcelona and its immediate district the *Lliga* won another victory.

During recent years the Catalan problem has been made more complex than ever by the deliberate efforts made in Madrid to confuse the issues. The

situation is, indeed, very difficult to understand, especially for foreigners who have heard much more about the anarchists and gunmen of Barcelona than about the real Catalan Home Rulers, who have continued to work for the autonomy of that region. The extreme Communists have no nationalist ideals, but are working openly for the establishment of a Soviet Republic throughout Spain; the Socialists are striving mainly for the removal of many social grievances, for the progressive education and elevation of the masses of toilers, and for the establishment, by constitutional means, of a Republic which shall hasten and facilitate the accomplishment of that programme; the industrial, commercial and professional classes are mostly conservative by nature, in Catalonia as elsewhere, and only ask for order and good government in order that they may be free to live peaceably and comfortably without interference from either Socialists or Communists. They are therefore inclined to support the *Lliga*, partly because it is not Radical, and partly because they are in the main convinced that Catalans would administer Catalan affairs much more successfully than has been done by the National Government in Madrid. The genuine autonomists include many fanatics, whose first and chief purpose is to get rid completely of Castillian domination, in order that the plums of office should fall to Catalans and not to Spaniards, who have no sympathy with local tradition; but the large majority are merely tired of national inefficiency and disorder, and wish to make and administer laws and regulations made by themselves to suit local circum-

stances, which often have nothing in common with those of Castille, Andalusia or other regions with entirely different needs from theirs. Catalans are essentially Europeans in sentiment and development, whereas Old Spain has not yet entirely shaken off the shackles of the Middle Ages, nor outgrown the strong Moorish strain in its blood. As Cándido Ruimar says, in "España al Desnudo" (1920), when summarising the causes of Spain's present condition: "The two diseases from which Spain suffers are indiscipline and indolence. A turbulent and verbose social type has to be transformed into a disciplined one capable of action." The Great War brought into further relief the differences between Catalans and other Spaniards. Catalonia was strongly in favour of the Allies, and sent many volunteers to fight for their cause, whereas the other parts of Spain looked on with detachment, and many Spaniards openly favoured German autocracy. There is very little *real Separatism* in Catalonia, but there is a strong and overwhelming desire that the region should administer its own local affairs without interference by people who know nothing about them and certainly do not understand them. If the present military *régime* in Spain should not lead to the better and more efficient Government, which is its avowed aim, all measures against Separatism in Catalonia will not only be useless, but will have exactly the contrary effect of that sought. They will only tend to revive still more strongly the old Catalan love of liberty and order and good government.

The magazine *España* issued in June, 1916, a

special number dedicated to the Catalan question, and printed a list, which was approved by most of the prominent Catalan leaders, of the demands which Catalan Nationalists consider the essential bases of Home Rule for that region. That list or schedule is as follows :

1. The creation of an autonomous Catalan State, which shall be supreme in all local affairs of Catalonia.
2. A parliament or other legislative Assembly responsible only to the Catalan people.
3. A Catalan executive or Government responsible only to the Assembly.
4. The old laws and constitution of Catalonia to be again put in force through the Assembly.
5. A separate Catalan Judicature, with the Supreme Catalan Court as final court of appeal in Catalan affairs.
6. The Catalan language to be the only official one, and to be freely used when desired in private intercourse, and in all official matters concerning Catalonia.
7. A federal union with the other Spanish peoples, exclusively for foreign affairs, the army and navy, coinage, weights and measures, trade, customs, general communications, etc.

Separatism pure and simple would probably mean the economic ruin of Catalonia through the loss of its present trade with the rest of Spain. That, however, is a debatable matter. The essential condition laid down by most of the modern leaders of Catalan thought is that federation with Spain can only be accepted as part of a general scheme of " Home Rule All Round," that is to say, for each of the component parts of the geographical entity known to-day as Spain. More than one leader insists that Portugal

must also come into such an arrangement, in order to form a Confederation of Iberian States. This seems to me impossible at present.

From the facts I have given, the reader will conclude that there is undoubtedly need for a measure which will take into consideration the aspirations of the Catalan populace. The efforts of the Military Directorate have so far been directed mainly *against* Catalan movements. Unless the Spanish militarists alter their tactics we may expect a continuance of trouble in Catalonia. Oppression cannot keep down so virile a race.

CHAPTER IX

THE PRESS

Comunicado el dolor,
Se aplaca si no se vence.
CALDERON.

(Sorrow, when told to another, is appeased even if it is not cured.)

I HAVE quoted so frequently from the Spanish Press that many of my readers may be curious to know more about it than can be gathered from translations of extracts. It has been said that the newspaper Press is a mirror of the national mind; like most generalisations, this is a half-truth. It is probably as accurate in the case of Spain as it is of other countries.

The newspapers of Spain have never compared favourably with those of the other Western nations (even if we exclude the journalistic giants of Great Britain and the United States of America) and their influence, such as it is, has never extended beyond the frontiers of their own country in the same way as that of certain organs of French and Italian opinion. They are inferior from every point of view to some other daily periodicals in the Spanish language published in South and Central America, and are rarely consulted or quoted by the latter. This unenviable inferiority is all the

more remarkable in view of the large number of really brilliant writers and competent administrators who have been connected with them in the past, and who still share the task of producing and distributing them. The explanation of this state of things is to be found in the peculiar conditions which rule in Spanish political life, and in other disadvantages which are more national than spiritual.

Taking, first, the intellectual reasons for the present deplorable state of Spanish journalism, we find that the career of journalist has never been considered sufficiently noble and important to be chosen and followed to the exclusion of other duties and interests. *Public opinion in Spain refuses to believe that any man can be altruistic enough to devote his life and energies to the propagation of any kind of principles for the sake of those principles alone.* It is convinced that all newspapers and all writers have their own private axes to grind, and that behind the views expressed in type there lies some purpose or intrigue which diminishes their importance, and which in many cases is of a nature to destroy their value as guides to the formation of an accurate opinion on the matters discussed. Whereas an Englishman or Frenchman is apt to read only one section of his own Press, and to finish by accepting as truth the statements and views of his favourite newspapers, a Spaniard is more disposed to vary his reading, and to criticise what he reads. There can be little doubt that this difference of attitude is fostered by the different systems of journalism. The anonymity of the English leading

article gives it a certain sense of seriousness and strength. The Spaniard is accustomed to look for a signature, and, perhaps knowing the writer more or less intimately, or being able to compare to-day's article with a previous one published over the same name, finds some difference of expression or change of attitude which leads him to throw the paper down with a comtemptuous comment on the writer's inconsistency. A close perusal of the Spanish daily Press during a lengthy period does not fail to provide some justification for this attitude on the part of the public. It has been explained that even elementary education is at a very low ebb in Spain, which officially admits the illiteracy of practically half of its total population. But the small proportion of intelligent readers amongst people with the rudiments of education readily remembers what it has read before from the same pen. There are in Spain, considering illiteracy and the consequent difficulty of influencing by press articles even a small section of any community, an extraordinary number of daily journals which do not even pay their way, and which are financed by men, for the sole purpose of self-advertisement or of maintaining a position already acquired. Just as most of the educated Spaniards—and even many uneducated ones—are to some extent orators, so also a large proportion of them are able to write more or less intelligently and interestingly. To-day most of the spade-work of Spanish journalism is done by young men fresh from college who have no thought or ambition to remain journalists, having adopted that calling for a year or two until they have settled down

to their real work as lawyers or engineers, or politicians. The result of this practice, added to the other factors which diminish the financial profit to be derived from newspapers in Spain, is to keep the pay of journalists very low. There is always a superabundance of new writers, to keep out of the profession those men who would otherwise enter it to make a career which might bring them both profit and renown. Of the few men who remain as professional journalists, a large proportion are tainted by their early training and connection, and, as experience has taught them that there is no consistency in Spanish politics, they lose whatever high ideals with which in many cases they begin their work. Their pens are always at the disposal of the man or cause which seems to offer the best likelihood of a satisfactory financial result. In this way we find a confusion and intermixing of names and ideas, which causes much perplexity in the mind of a foreign observer. One often sees that a man whose articles have usually been of perhaps a somewhat subversive, or shall we say progressive, character, suddenly bursts into print in another newspaper, while still writing in that way, as an ardent champion of constitutionalism and even of reaction. There are quite recent instances where the correspondent in a foreign capital of an ultra-Conservative Madrid newspaper, has returned to Spain and begun immediately to contribute articles to a more or less Radical journal, and there were recently journalists who actually occupied the apparently conflicting posts of foreign editor of a sober Tory newspaper and sub-editor of a

journal claiming to voice the opinions of the extreme left in politics.

Dealing now with the financial reasons for the inferiority of Spanish journalism, we may first of all recall what has been said in the previous paragraph concerning the poor remuneration received by most of the writers in the Press, and add that every one else concerned in the production and distribution of a Spanish newspaper is also badly paid. It is frequently and justifiably alleged that Spanish capitalists in general are too grasping and show too little consideration—generosity is out of the question—for the subordinates who are an essential part of the machinery which creates the sometimes enormous wealth enjoyed by the former. The old difference between employer and employed (one is almost tempted to write between master and slave, so little have social conditions changed in Spain) still exists as much in the world of journalism as in industrial spheres. It is not, therefore, at all surprising that the Spanish newspaper owner—whether an individual or a company—should take advantage of the abundance of willing workers and endeavour, in the one case to lessen the expense of his own propaganda, and in the other case to retain as much as possible of the exiguous profits which may still be made here and there.

It may be interesting here to glance at some statistics published in a book, called "Estadística de la Prensa Periódica de España," prepared by the Geographical and Statistical Institute. This Institute is a department of the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts, and their publication provides the

latest and perhaps the most reliable figures on the subject.

Number of Publications.

Quarterly	61
Monthly	717
Fortnightly	320
Tri-monthly	101
Bi-weekly	563
Tri-weekly	36
Daily	290
Other periods	34
Not stated	127
Total	2,249

The excessive number of Spanish daily newspapers in the chief towns naturally tends to reduce the possible circulation to be obtained by even the best among them, and that circulation is itself limited by two important factors — one already mentioned—the illiteracy of a considerable proportion of the working class, and even of the lower middle class population, the other being the apathy of the average Spaniard, even of the educated classes, towards public affairs in general and towards those of his own country in particular. Although the Great War roused some Spaniards from that apathy and indifference, the net effect of it to-day is much less than an outsider might imagine; and although most of the principal Spanish newspapers found it advisable to send or appoint correspondents to the chief foreign capitals, and do still send them on special missions to various countries, it is doubtful

whether Spain as a whole feels sufficient interest in foreign affairs to make such expenses yield the expected return. With illiteracy and apathy, therefore, added to the competition caused by numbers, it is not possible for any Spanish newspaper to reach and maintain a very high circulation, although, as very exceptional cases, two Madrid newspapers each claim to-day to have a reached a daily circulation of 200,000. Even the best and most widely read of the other papers in the country probably come far short of half that figure, and in such circumstances their income, whether from sales or advertisements, cannot be very large, especially in a country where advertising in any form is still in its infancy. Of all the serious newspapers existing in Spain in 1914 and still continuing publication, it is probable that not one is really solvent, as all of them received large loans from the Government to enable them to continue selling their issues at a ½*d.* per copy, during years when the paper alone cost them—or would have cost them if the loans had not been given in the form of paper—very much more. That assistance was withdrawn in January 1921. When the loans ceased a Royal Decree was published, raising the minimum price of newspapers to 1*d.* per copy, and limiting greatly the paper which might be employed in producing a newspaper at that price.

There are other material reasons for the present poor condition of Spanish journalism. Spain does not produce wood-pulp, but has to import either that or the finished product. The cost of labour is lower there than in most countries where wood-pulp or

paper is made, but as the Spaniards are unable to produce the finished article as cheaply as their foreign competitors, the essential raw material for newspapers has to be imported, and heavy charges have to be paid on it in spite of its admission into the country duty free under a special Royal Decree issued early in 1921. In addition to this disadvantage, most of the newspapers in Spain—and this applies still, even to some of the best-known journals in Madrid—are printed on antiquated and worn-out machines; the combination of poor paper, poor ink and poor machinery result frequently in the production of a half-illegible and uncouth-looking sheet which tries the eyesight and blackens the hands of its reader. The old and apparently insoluble problem of transport is one of the chief material reasons which operate against the development and improvement of Spanish newspapers. There are no "newspaper trains" in Spain, where railway communications, even for passengers, are the last word in inadequacy and inefficiency. Newspapers in Madrid with a provincial circulation must print special country editions at awkward hours for despatch by the ordinary trains, of which on many lines there is only one each day with the necessary connections. Such is the bad state of the railways that complaints are frequent of connections being missed, and of even important towns not 300 miles away receiving their news from the metropolis forty-eight hours after its publication. The frequency with which trains carrying the reels of blank paper fail to arrive from port or mill is another factor which compels the unfortunate editor to reduce still more

the amount of material which he is permitted to use, and to issue a paper only two-thirds or one-half of its normal size. In these matters we see how the many problems with which Spain is confronted at this moment are interlocked, and how they mutually complicate each other. Journalism is in this way intimately connected with and interested in railway and custom house problems. No real progress in any direction can be made until all angles of the situation are carefully studied and an efficient system of government introduced.

Having now given this brief explanation of some of the main reasons why Spanish newspapers are not better managed and more influential, it is well to make it clear that the outlook for the future is hopeful, and that better things may be expected from Spain when once the present material obstacles are removed. There are already in Madrid some newspapers, notably *El Sol*, *La Libertad*, *La Voz* and *A.B.C.*, which represent very praiseworthy efforts to get out of the old ruts and conventionalities of Spanish journalism; they have in them the germ of much better things. To the newspapers mentioned must be added *La Vanguardia*, of Barcelona. There is also a stirring of bones amongst some of the older and well-known journals which realise the seriousness of the attack made by these more active newcomers. Some of the old news sheets have already gone and others will doubtless disappear, others, again, will find new life and energy, and rise to positions of which they never dreamed in the old pre-war days. There can never be any lack of literary ability to fill their

pages with polished and well-reasoned articles, and there has never been at any previous period such a galaxy of talent as is to be found amongst the contributors to the Spanish daily and weekly Press of to-day. In their ranks are many who have travelled widely, an experience which was not enjoyed by their predecessors; the result is a broader and bolder outlook on life, and a better understanding of modern problems and requirements. The Liberal and Radical papers, in particular, are noteworthy for the abundance of brilliant young writers, whose names are daily found at the foot of articles revealing a deep appreciation of the root causes of Spain's backwardness, and a strong determination to enlighten the nation and arouse it to action. I have quoted many of them. Best of all, however, is the waning popularity of the purely political newspaper, whose articles are frankly intended to serve the interests of some party or statesman, even when they run counter to the desires of the majority and to the higher interests of the country as a whole. Journalistic "rags," whether their purpose be to attack or to defend a particular individual, are now almost entirely confined to small towns and rural districts. But it must at the same time be confessed that even in Madrid itself time must elapse before the daily Press can claim the trust and confidence of the public as it does in countries where political education is more widely spread.

The reader will have appreciated from many of the quotations I have given throughout this book, that here are men in Spain who are not afraid to depict,

in forceful language, the evils from which the country suffers and to offer tentative solutions for the problems which face every Government. That in itself is a healthy sign. But let us not forget that a few days after the Military Directorate had taken upon itself the task of government, a strict censorship was imposed on the Press, and the free expression of opinion was at once stifled. Is this in the best interests of the Spanish people? This move is intended to prevent the circulation of statements hostile to the revolutionary Government. But is it not in fact an indication of the reactionary nature of this Government? And is it not an indication that the Military Directorate are afraid to run the gauntlet of criticism by their own countrymen? Of such stuff are Governments in Spain made to-day; they are the same as the Governments of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER X

THE MILITARY DIRECTORATE

En batallas tales,
Los que vencen son leales,
Los vencidos los traidores.
CALDERON.

(In contests of this kind the winners are the faithful and the vanquished the traitors.)

THE preceding chapters give a pretty accurate, though I fear rather depressing, description of a state of affairs in Spain, which has aroused great popular discontent and satisfied nobody.

Centralisation in Madrid of all authority and political influence, which legitimately appertained to regional corporations, had deprived members for the outlying portions of the country of any constitutional means whereby they might secure a hearing for the interests of the communities which they represented, at any rate partially. They themselves had been affected by the virus of personal politics and corrupt administration, and were not free from many of the defects and vices plainly visible in the National Government. The slight progress of education amongst the industrial workers of the north-eastern districts, from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean, and the better standard of living attained by those workers through the growing importance of

Spanish industry, fostered by protective tariffs and the temporary isolation due to the Great War, had rendered it impossible to maintain them in the state of semi-slavery which was almost universally the lot of Spanish workers until quite recent times.

The general discontent felt by the Spanish peoples had caused serious disturbances in Catalonia and other manufacturing districts, besides arousing almost forgotten nationalist and regionalist aspirations, both there and in other parts of the country which had possessed complete independence until their union with the Castillian kingdom in the fifteenth century. Nor was the situation much better in Old Castille itself, and the agricultural problems of Andalusia, Leon and Extremadura threatened those regions with anarchy and destruction. Everywhere people complained of the complete stagnation which had become characteristic of the Central Government, the members of which, alternating in office with monotonous regularity on the basis of officially controlled elections, seemed deaf to all the protests of their fellow citizens and to the dictates of the most elementary patriotism. The traditional parties of Liberals and Conservatives were sub-divided into as many factions as there were men bold enough to make a bid for individual supremacy; but their members still possessed sufficient cohesion to keep out of office the more advanced parties of Republicans, Reformists, Federalists, Socialists and Communists, all of which suffered from similar internal dissensions and were incapable of a joint and serious effort to counteract the cynicism and incapacity of their opponents. The

leaders of these parties were themselves tainted in the public eye with the same faults as leaders of the other parties, and could not claim to represent the really sound, progressive and intellectual elements of the country, who found themselves without a guide or any outstanding personality around whom they might group themselves for a common effort to improve their lot.

Matters had reached an *impasse*, from which there could be seen no way out save by violence, and there was the fear in Spain that any armed movement of protest might and probably would merely open the gates to communism and anarchy. The would-be reformers could not count on the support of the Army, the only real organised force (apart from the Church) in the country, because many of the Army leaders were known to be reactionary in their general political views; and it was uncertain how far the leavening of the rank and file with popular elements recruited by compulsory service would act as a deterrent to the reactionaries. . Meanwhile, the Army itself suffered from the general disorganisation and corruption. Indications of more or less subversive behaviour amongst many of its officers below the rank of general had already been noticed before discontent was brought to a head by the disaster in Morocco in 1921, and by the subsequent hesitancy and incompetency shown by the various Ministries since that date in the conduct of the campaign and in the formation of a definite line of policy. Rumours began to be rife that the Army was dissatisfied with the King because he continued to trust the reins of office to the same

people who were responsible for the existing bad situation. It is difficult to see how he could do otherwise and act within the Constitution. It is said that the intention of the Army was to bring pressure on the monarch in order to compel his resignation, and to put in his place his son, the Prince of Asturias, whose youthfulness would make it easy for the re actionaries to enforce their own policy.

The centre of discontent in Spain was Barcelona, where the activities of Syndicalists, Communists, Anarchists, Separatists (often intensified by acts of employers and the Government at Madrid) necessitated the presence in Catalonia of the most important military force in the country. Don Miguel Primo de Rivera, Marqués de Estella, was, before 12th September, 1923, Military Governor of Barcelona, and at the head of this force. With a few other generals he planned, during the summer months, a revolution to take place on 15th September. Information of the intended move leaked out, and he found it necessary to act on the 12th. Not only had Primo de Rivera consulted the senior officers of the Army, but many juniors, and even non-commissioned ranks, were consulted as to the attitude of the rank and file, upon whom the ultimate success or otherwise of the plan must depend. The question of responsibility, civil and military, for the military *débâcle* of 1921 in Morocco had become intense during the autumn of 1923, and the final decision of the Government so unsatisfactory, that almost any move against the professional politicians would have been welcomed by the masses. Thus, when Primo de Rivera issued his

manifesto on 13th September, declaring to the country that the Spanish Army, "in order to save the people from a continuance of misgovernment," had demanded of the King the resignation of the Cabinet, he knew what support to expect from his military colleagues and troops, and that the public would not place many immediate obstacles in his way.

The inner history of the part played by Alfonso XIII in the military *coup d'etat* will probably not be known for some time. The London *Daily Telegraph* has published a statement of the moves behind the scenes before the revolution. Time alone will prove its accuracy or otherwise. What we do know is, that whilst acting unconstitutionally, the King exhibited much political sagacity. He was staying at San Sebastian when Primo de Rivera's demand arrived. Instead of returning to Madrid immediately, His Majesty spent many hours in getting into touch with the Military Governors, the General Staff, some leading politicians, and a few important members of the public, to ascertain exactly the situation throughout the country. Having informed himself of the trend of events he proceeded to Madrid, where he was met by members of the Government and by the officer commanding the Madrid garrison, General Cavalcanti. The Prime Minister, Alhucemas, submitted orders for the arrest of Primo de Rivera, a provisional plan for the suppression of the military revolt, and a Decree to summon Parliament. This was quite constitutional. The King refused to sign any of these documents—asking for time to consider what action was to be taken. The Prime Minister

thereupon tendered his resignation, which was immediately accepted. Alfonso XIII telegraphed to General Primo de Rivera, asking him to come to Madrid and take charge of affairs. The Military Governor of Barcelona came to Madrid and appointed a provisional Government, consisting of Generals Cavalcanti, Federico Berenguer, Dabán and Saco. All the Military Governors throughout the country—except one, since superseded—adhered to the movement, and with them their subordinates of all ranks joined. The only openly discordant note in the country was in the form of a general strike, protesting against the *coup*, declared by the workers at Bilbao; it lasted only a day.

At the outbreak of the movement it was suggested that Señor Alba, Minister for Foreign Affairs, be arrested, as he was in San Sebastian, and it was expected that he would take to flight. The two generals in charge at that place declined to undertake his arrest because it would be an act of violence distasteful to the King, who was also there. General Martinez Anido, to whom the proposal was also made, refused it on the ground that he was a personal enemy of Alba, and would be accused of acting out of spite if he arrested that Minister—a very praiseworthy attitude.

The military authorities in Madrid only became aware of the movement when General Primo de Rivera, who was speaking over the telephone from Barcelona to the Minister for War, refused to resign his post as captain-general, and declared himself in open rebellion. As already stated, those authorities,

although not immediately involved in the movement, did nothing to oppose or hinder it. On the contrary, they gave it open support as soon as the King had dismissed the Cabinet and signed the Decree appointing Generals Cavalcanti, Berenguer, Dabán and Saro under General Primo de Rivera's Presidency, as the first, but temporary Directorate charged with the government of the country. This was very soon afterwards replaced by the first permanent Directorate, composed of General Primo de Rivera, President, and Generals Alfonso Vallespinosa, F. Ruiz del Portal, L. Navarro Requena, F. Gomez Jordana, Mario Muslera, L. Hermosa Kith, Antonio Mayandia and the Marquis of Magaz. The senior permanent official in each Ministry was put in charge of its affairs and made responsible only to the Directorate, which lost no time in issuing, with the King's signature, a number of decrees which made it omnipotent.

As soon as the King had signed the Decrees appointing the members of the Directorate, with Primo de Rivera as President, the onlooking and stupefied public for the first time became aware of the powers of the new Government. Article I of the Decree, appointing Primo de Rivera, reads as follows :

I, Alfonso XIII, etc., confer on Lieutenant-General Primo de Rivera y Orbaneja, Marqués de Estella, the office of President of the Military Directory, charged with the Government of the country, with power to lay before me such Decrees as public welfare may require, which shall have the force of law unless and until they be modified by laws approved by the Cortes, and submitted for my Royal sanction.

The importance of this clause and the power it placed in the hands of Primo de Rivera and his colleagues will be appreciated if read with the Decrees soon afterwards signed: (1) abolishing the posts of President of the Council and of all Ministers and Under-Secretaries except those for War and Foreign Affairs; (2) dissolving Parliament; (3) suspending the Constitutional Guarantees (equivalent to the English Habeas Corpus Acts), declaring what we would call "martial law" throughout Spain, and transferring to Military Governors the duties of Civil Governors, whose posts are for the time abolished; (4) ordering the formation of *somatens* in all provinces. (The *somaten* is a unit similar to Mussolini's "*fascio*," but the force which carried Primo de Rivera into power was, as I have stated, the Army. This is the chief distinction between the Spanish revolutionary movement and the Italian. The part played so far by the *somatens* has been insignificant.)

In the chapter dealing with the Spanish Press I have referred to the Directorate and its attitude towards the newspapers. It may, perhaps, be convenient here to look for a moment at the Madrid newspapers of 13th and 14th September, 1923—the days following the revolutionary *coup*.

First, it must be understood that the move caused just as much surprise throughout Spain as it did in foreign countries—England for example. On the morning of the 13th September, the Liberal organ, *El Heraldo de Madrid*, published a leading article, stating that it is "unable to believe that military sedition can lead to any good result, since revolution

to bear fruit must take its origin in the mass of the people." On the same day the democratic *Prensa*, commenting on the *coup*, complained of Primo de Rivera's high-handed action, and said "whatever may be the result of Primo de Rivera's adventure, history will execrate his deed and place a black mark against his name." On 14th September *El Socialista* called the *coup d'état* a triumph of brute force over liberal and democratic principles, and drew comfort from the fact that the day will come when the weapon of force employed by the military will be turned against its users; for "those who sow the wind reap the whirlwind." The clerical *Debate*, in accordance with the traditions of the Church in Spain, favoured the action of the Army and approved its courage in taking charge of affairs. The independent *Sol* was neither for nor against, but will pay more attention to the deeds than to the words of the Directorate. Every shade of opinion was agreed upon one thing—that the Directorate could not be worse than the Governments of recent years. The tendency during the first days of the Directorate, after everybody had learned that there was to be no bloodshed, was to give the generals a chance to show their ability. Within a week a strict censorship was imposed and *nothing unfavourable to the present régime may now be published*, up to the time of writing these lines.

One of the first measures taken by the Directorate was to declare that the hours of work for civil servants were to be from 9 a.m. till 2 p.m., and that all were to be in their places by 9.15, when the register would

be closed. The results were what might have been expected by all those who were in touch with Spanish political life ; in many offices a large number of clerks appeared who were quite unknown to the daily workers there, and for whom there was not even seating accommodation. These new arrivals were the *protégés* of Ministers and political "bosses." They were on the list of civil servants merely for the sake of collecting a salary, and were not expected to attend at their departments ; some there were who used not to trouble about even collecting their salary, but sent agents to do so for them. This will readily be seen to have been necessary when we know that some of these "officials" held no less than FIFTEEN appointments, each with its separate salary ! Many were dismissed or suspended at once ; although the general public may applaud moralising measures of that kind, the victims and their families (the latter often ignorant up to then of the situation of their breadwinners) feel that bitter and lasting resentment which prepares the ground for reaction.

A Decree which dismissed and re-appointed local councils and mayors had a favourable reception at the hands of many people, who knew only too well the abuses which had accompanied the election of the fallen and unregretted *soi-disant* representatives of the people. Many excuses may be found for such a measure as part of the general campaign of purification of the administration—proclaimed as the main object of the rebellion. The abolition throughout Spain of the hardly-won reform of trial by jury, the

Decree bearing date of 21st September 1923, is quite another matter and cannot be so easily justified; the suspension of that right previously for twelve months in Barcelona had not encouraged any hope that the administration of justice would be thereby improved. The Supreme Court of Justice was formed of one admiral as president, one lieutenant-general and two generals of division, one rear-admiral, and two lay councillors. The elected portions of the Senate were dissolved later in September, but the Directorate announced its intention of not interfering with the life senators; these are, of course, mostly reactionary in politics and not likely to attempt to interfere with the new "Government."

Many other decrees have been published in the *Madrid Gazette*, tending to the realisation of the programme of thorough reform set down in the proclamation issued by General Primo de Rivero in the early morning of 13th September, on initiating his movement. All sinecures are to be abolished, the Civil Service is to be reformed; Catalan Separatism is to be suppressed with the full force and vigour of the Army and Police; the Augean stables of municipal government are to be cleansed; the abuses of *Caciquismo* ended; a civil Government will take the place of the Directorate (the date of this event is no longer certain); profiteering in food stuffs will be punished; ecclesiastical business will be under the control of the Foreign Office, and not under the Ministry of Justice as hitherto; indecency in music halls will be punished; a committee will revise all trials which have taken place during the last five years

and will have power to dismiss or suspend judges who are found to have committed illegalities; there will be 14,000 recruits less called to the colours in 1924; all former Prime Ministers and other members of Cabinets, together with ex-heads of Departments in the Army, Navy or Civil Service, shall forthwith cease to be directors of any company or commercial enterprise; payments to permanent Members of the Senate are to cease during dissolution; all *dossiers* relating to the concession of the military and naval medal are to be revised; in each chief town delegates of the Central Government are to be appointed; persons found spreading false news will be court-martialled; Spanish must be the only language used in schools, universities and in official business; the King must not be discussed in the Press; *the possible ills which may result from the present régime must not be mentioned.* Up to the time of writing three of the most pressing problems have not yet been touched, and every attempt by journalists and others to obtain definite information in regard to them from the Directorate has failed. They are: the future policy in Morocco, the Agrarian problem, and Finance.

Time alone will tell how far these Decrees succeed in accomplishing what was hoped for from them. Not only at the period of other "*pronunciamientos*," which have been made in Spain, but even in perfectly normal times an immense number of irreproachable laws and Decrees have appeared in the *Gazette*, of which it might truthfully be said that they never appeared again, but were soon completely

forgotten by both their authors and those against whom they were directed.

As the reader might expect, from the first days of the revolution the Church has whole-heartedly supported the Military Party now in power. Towards the end of September, 1923, the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, Primate of Spain, the Archbishop of Valencia and the Bishop of Madrid, issued Pastoral Letters calling upon the masses of the people to support the King and the present form of Government. That such an appeal to the people is necessary will be understood if it is borne in mind that the active elements in Spanish politics are small and the masses extremely indifferent. The danger of future unrest can only be avoided by unanimity among the people, upon whose decision successful government—even in Spain—must rest.

The enthusiasm manifested throughout Spain for the reforms which the Directorate has proposed is not deeply rooted, and is not shared by those who are acquainted with the full significance of problems which remain to be faced. Labour is badly organised in Spain, but its power has grown considerably in late years, and is still growing. All Labour elements, including Syndicalists, Communists, Socialists and Anarchists, are opposed to the Directorate ; they have so far done nothing effective in opposing the military Government. But the possibility, even the probability, of concerted action by Labour against this *régime* cannot be left out of consideration in estimating the strength of the rulers. It is understood that Primo de Rivera intends to decentralise Government

as much as possible—and thereby " solve " the question of Catalan Separatism. If this is to be his policy, he has made a very bad beginning by issuing his Decree against the Catalan language, flag and propaganda generally. Nothing could more seriously offend the moderates who follow Cambó, or the extremists who follow Rovira y Virgili, than the attempt now being made by Primo de Rivera to crush the national aspirations of a race which is not Castillian in language, customs or ideals. No doubt the Directorate will meet with much sympathy in their desire to terminate the terrorism which has reigned in Barcelona of late years; but to end the terrorism by the application of force does not remove the cause of the terrorism. The Republican Party is not a negligible quantity, nor are the Reformists. Bad as the old politicians of the Liberal and Conservative Parties were, they have still many sympathisers who are powerful. A landlord in Spain is probably more powerful than one in any other European country at present. The many abuses and cruelties of the past, although a cause of hatred, cannot wipe out the present fears of an ignorant peasantry, and it is probable that tenants will still continue to act in accordance with the dictates of the owners of their lands; these are mostly Liberals and Conservatives, supporters of the old *régime*.

As I write, all the forces of opposition to the Directorate are suffering from a kind of stupor. Its supporters are so full of enthusiasm that they do not see danger ahead. Even at the time of writing, when so

short a period has elapsed since Primo de Rivera's *pronunciamiento* that it is difficult to see events in their proper perspective, it is possible to notice the beginning of a discontent which must grow. At first Primo de Rivera asked for thirty days to complete the process of cleansing political life, and preparing the way for constitutional reforms. Later he asked for ninety days. Now he has flown a kite; a period of three years is mentioned as necessary to complete the work. Meanwhile, the Constitution of 30th June, 1876, has been torn up, and there is not yet a Parliament to draw up a new one. The old gang are becoming restive. The position of the King is not safe, even with the present Government, and the military *Juntas* have not yet ceased to exist, despite their official abolition. It is not improbable that we shall hear more of the *Juntas*—they are powerful enough to cause the fall of the Directorate, as they have caused the fall of several Constitutional Governments. That there are several dissensions in the Army is common knowledge, and many of the new recruits to the ranks are tainted with Socialistic ideals. This is a serious problem—and one which the Directorate cannot solve. Even if the forces of opposition are too apathetic or disorganised to act against the Directorate, and the military *Juntas* or other factions in the Army do not cause a fatal split in the military party now in power, the reforms effected by the present Government will stand or fall with the transition to civil Government. Successful transition to civil Government is difficult, even in the best circumstances. In Spain it will be fraught with the

gravest danger—since the reforms of Primo de Rivera may easily perish in the process, and should this be the case the most active elements in the Opposition (the Socialists) will not fail to seize the opportunity of gaining power. In such a case there would be an end of the monarchy and the beginning of a more chaotic state of affairs than existed before 12th September, 1923, since the monarchy is, with the Church, the only tie which unites all classes.

To sum up, it may be stated that social reform cannot possibly be carried through in Spain without the introduction of good laws and of a good system of popular education in accordance with the needs and wishes of the people. This will require years, not days or months, to accomplish, whatever may be the energy and the enthusiasm with which the matter is taken in hand. It is to be feared that the generals who have shown so much love for their country and jealousy for its fair fame are much less than competent to undertake such a task.

Little doubt can be felt by any one who knows Spain and her people and the immensity of Spanish problems awaiting solution, that many more changes will occur in the kaleidoscope of Spanish politics before such a miracle will be accomplished. Meanwhile, not only terrorists, but Socialists, Republicans, Reformists, and even mere Liberals, will recover from the first stupor into which they have been thrown by this last-ditch effort of "patriotism" on the part of Spanish officers. They will begin to get into touch with one another again, to re-organise their scattered forces and even, if necessary, to arm themselves for

the everlasting struggle against the forces of reaction and retrogression which, under a mask of morality and pretended progress, have seized power in Spain and now hold it. How many weeks or months must pass before this happens I will not attempt to prophesy. But it seems inevitable.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

La esperanza es la ultima hez que apuramos en el fondo del cáliz de amargura.—R. DE CAMPOAMOR.

(Hope is the last of the dregs that we drain from the bottom of the cup of sorrow.)

~~Having read the account given~~ in these pages of the actual conditions of life in Spain to-day, one ought no longer to feel surprise that a country so favoured by Nature should be so poor, and exercise so little influence in the councils of Europe. It would be very unfair, however, to blame only the present generation of Spaniards for the general backwardness of their country, for the slowness with which they progress in the removal of the causes of their undeserved condition, and for sloth in the inauguration of those reforms which are indispensable preliminaries to any real advancement.

The chief obstacle in the path of good government in Spain is, in my opinion, the lack of a high standard of education. There are other very considerable difficulties in the way, but the illiteracy and, consequently, mental darkness of the masses must be given pride of place. I have already devoted a chapter to Education—or I should say want of Education in Spain; it can never be over-emphasised. When fully

one-half of a nation is unable to read even newspapers or to write a simple letter, and perhaps four-fifths of the remaining half read nothing but the very inadequate daily Press or only glance at the pictures in a weekly humorous magazine, it is not difficult to explain the political backwardness and deficient social sense of that nation. Observers of events in Czarist Russia just before the War were unanimous that the then existing system of Government there was detestable. They were almost equally agreed in declaring that the Russian people were not fit for complete self-government on the same lines as Western and more advanced nations, but required a period of apprenticeship through the medium of local administration, which should gradually fit them for the greater responsibility afterwards to be placed by degrees on their shoulders.

The conditions under which Russian local administration was carried on before the Great War could not possibly be worse than those now existing in Spain. Instead of being a good training school for the future rulers of the nation, local politics in the Iberian Peninsula are the breeding place of every kind of political vice. Law is openly disregarded and defied, more often than not, by the very authorities charged with its enforcement. In country districts the "*Cacique*" has long ruled supreme. He distributes places and honours to his own relatives and personal friends, instructs his tenants and other fellow-citizens how they shall vote at national elections, if they vote at all, and uses every kind of petty and gross persecution against the few individuals sufficiently audacious

to oppose him. There are few elected local authorities, and it is not more difficult for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a declared oppositionist to secure election. If Spanish electors were all men of sufficient education to understand their rights under the existing laws, which, although defective, do not countenance such acts as I have drawn attention to in this book, they would not tolerate one-tenth of the petty local tyranny which is now so common. If they were able to read papers and books which would remind them of their civic duties, it would not have been necessary for Señor L. de Hoyos Sainz to write about Spanish agriculturists at the last general election, lamenting the fact that the farmers had *no direct representatives* in the Chamber of Deputies; he said: "As regards the result of these elections in direct, pure, and efficient representation of agriculture, they will be impotence stereotyped. This is the plainest proof of the disconnection and isolation of millions of individuals and thousands of communities which compose the flock of Spanish agriculturists; a flock composed of beings who are not so much indifferent as they are apathetic, and who are incapable of any reaction even in self-defence. The facts are evident, and so easy to prove that they even deprive farmers of any right to complain or to defend themselves, because they do not seem to form a group, we will not say with ideals which move citizens, but with interests and appetites such as drive poor beasts. Our national farming population show no movement towards joint defence."

It is evident from this that neither social nor

general political education in Spain can be initiated in the rural districts which hold the greater part of the population of the country; they are as yet incapable of any steady and organised effort, even on their own behalf. Impulse towards reform must come from the more instructed and mentally active town artisans and other workers. But the sullen anger and desperation of the agriculturist render him a potent source of mischief if circumstances at last rouse him to action before he knows what to do or how to do it.

The population of Spain at the national census in 1911 was just under 20 million souls, and was variously estimated at a figure between 22 and 23 millions at the last census, which was made in 1921; the official results of the latter are not yet tabulated. The total sum of money entered for purposes of education (including the upkeep and care of all national museums, etc.) on the Budget estimates for the financial year 1921–1922 was £6,461,572. This included all extraordinary estimates during the preceding year, and all unpaid balances. Reckoning the population at 20 millions, it will be found that the charge per head for all educational purposes was *six shillings and fivepence*; this in a country where education is theoretically as free and general as it is in Great Britain! During the same financial year the combined cost of the Army and Navy was estimated at 23*s.* 3½*d.* per head. The cost of administration in the Home Department alone (Ministerio de Gobernación) was 9*s.* 8½*d.* per head, or just *half as much again* as the cost of education. How far landowners

and capitalists are doing their duty in the task of educating their less fortunate fellow-citizens may be seen from the fact that the same Budget estimated the yield of direct taxation (which includes many items paid by the whole of the nation) at 29*s.* 3*d.* per head of the population; not even enough to pay the cost of the three Ministries for War, Marine and the Interior. The costly war against a few savage tribes in Morocco still continues to eat up a ridiculously high percentage of the national income.

Another of the heavy handicaps under which the Spanish nation labours is the lack of efficient means of communication between the capital and the provinces, and between province and province. Railway services in Spain are miserably inadequate for the duties which they ought to perform. It is true that without easy means of intercourse between peoples there can be no proper and complete mutual understanding of character, nor even a thorough realisation that they have interests in common. Even in Great Britain, after centuries of common and mutual penetration between the peoples of England, Scotland and Wales, and after many years' working of a national system of education, there still exist what seem to us marked differences between the thoughts and characteristics of Englishmen, Scotsmen, and Welshmen. How much greater must those differences be in a country like Spain, formed by the union of many small States, which until comparatively recent times were practically independent of each other, and still peopled by races of varied origin and language. These races have never yet learnt to conciliate their often

opposing interests, nor the truth of the motto that in union there is strength.

In Spain, unhappily, the population is divided up into a multiplicity of conflicting sections. The Catalans and the Andalusians, the Basques and the Galicians, neither know and help one another, nor do they make any attempt to do so. All of them and of the people in other provinces are opposed in many ways to the inhabitants of Castille, and utterly out of touch with the National Government in Madrid. They accuse the central administration, and rightly, of complete neglect of provincial interests, whilst it draws from the provinces its own means of existence and the wherewithal to maintain a horde of functionaries and officials, whose only cares are their pockets and their stomachs. Great Britain's troubles with Ireland, which have at last culminated in the almost complete political separation of those two countries, have several counterparts in Spain. Catalans are as eager to have control of their own affairs as the Irish ever were. The Basque provinces long to regain the local powers which have been sadly curtailed during the last two generations. Even the poor province of Galicia, which has no industry worth mentioning, save those of agriculture and fishing, and which ought therefore to rejoice at being united to a country which can buy its products, has educated persons born in the province who are as ardent Home Rulers as any inhabitant of Barcelona; nor can this cause surprise when it is known that Galicia, with an area of 11,263 square miles and a population of 2,063,500 souls, only contains 428 miles of mostly single track railway out

of the scanty 10,500 miles of similar railways in the whole of Spain. On the other hand, it has 3,604 miles of high road; the hardworking character of its population, compared with that of many other parts of Spain, may be judged from the fact that one of its "provinces" or counties, that of Pontevedra, heads the list of Spanish counties for road making, and possesses about 284 yards of road per square mile of territory.

Many hard things are thought and said about Spanish statesmen, both by Spaniards and foreigners, and nobody would pretend, least of all those statesmen themselves, that they do all that they might do with the means now in their power if there was reasonable economy in the administration of public funds, and the necessary diminution of the hosts of useless and incompetent officials now living on the State. It must at the same time be apparent that the most energetic and altruistic ruler would find it impossible to govern the country properly and leave every part of it contented, whilst education and communication remain in their present deplorably backward state. Some of the people who criticise those statesmen admit that there is no magician's wand, the mere waving of which would bring about a fundamental change in the material conditions in Spain. They say—and I agree with them—that the regeneration and reconstruction of the country will require the unremitting toil and self-sacrifice of generations of patriots. They demand a complete change of spirit, a different mental attitude, and a firm resolve to initiate and press forward, at whatever cost to the reformer him-

self, the many and basic reforms for which the newly awakened national consciousness is now forcibly clamouring in every part of the country.

The quickening caused by the Spanish-American War of 1898 of the dry bones of Spain's long extinct but never-forgotten greatness, aided and encouraged by the increased wealth of the people owing to the Great War, has effected a complete change in the nation's attitude and prospects, and roused all the more energetic and productive sections of it to renewed and greater activity. The change is greatest where it might perhaps have been least expected, but where its consequences can be most quickly seen and felt, that is to say, amongst those classes of the community which did the real work of the nation under conditions of the greatest hardship and injustice. Those classes now realise that their self-appointed rulers and masters were not mere blind agents for the fulfilment of the laws of human life, which create diverse categories of human beings according to their merits. On the contrary, they regard the rulers as usurpers of a power which was ruthlessly employed for the sole purpose of maintaining the advantages acquired by the privileged class, and of repressing by all available means every effort at self-improvement made by the branch of society which furnished the hewers of wood and drawers of water for the whole nation. The eyes, not only of the manual labouring classes, but also of the lower middle class, have been opened. The ordinary Spaniard is no longer willing to repeat parrot-like and resignedly those words so dear to the hearts of

comfortable people, whether clergy or laity, in all countries :

> " *God bless the squire and his relations,*
> *And keep us in our proper stations.*"

From being mere herds of beasts of burden workers have awakened to self-consciousness as men. The effects of that awakening are naturally greatest in those countries where there existed previously the greatest gulf between the favoured and the disinherited of fortune. In no Western country could that gulf be compared to the wide and deep abyss which tradition and custom (supported and emphasised by law and Church) have created in Spain between her moneyed and her poorer classes. In no country does the fire of a fierce resentment burn with greater heat or threaten consequences more dire unless at least a beginning is quickly made with those reforms which may no longer be safely postponed. The situation at present is an exceedingly critical one and will put to the severest test the goodwill, energy and constancy of all good Spaniards, whether they belong to the privileged or to the oppressed classes, or come from the small class of mentally alert, which is now slowly emerging and claiming to be heard in the administration of the country.

What must cause great concern to the student of Spanish politics is the absence of any sign that the present rulers of the country, whether calling themselves Conservatives or Liberals, or Military Directorate, have really learnt and taken to heart the lessons

of the last five or six years. When the Great War was in its final critical stage, and all the combatants practically exhausted, many things were said and done to lead Spain to suppose that she would have an almost paramount influence in European affairs when the struggle should at last end. The inborn pride of race inherited by every educated Spaniard (though often repressed and tempered with bitterness by the recollection of facts which tend to lower that pride) led Spanish statesmen to imagine too easily and too readily that things were as they seemed, and that Spain, in spite of all her backwardness and unpreparedness, and notwithstanding the conditions caused by their own culpable negligence and that of their predecessors, was about to find herself entitled and able to speak as an equal with those giants of "civilisation," who had risked their whole existence in the European War. This conviction only served to increase the smug self-satisfaction of Spanish political leaders. In anticipation they saw themselves the idols of their nation, receiving that praise and glory (not to mention more substantial benefits) which would be the reward of those who had known how to avoid the dangers and losses of actual war, whilst at the same time raising their country to a pinnacle resembling that from which she fell some hundreds of years ago. If any of them, therefore, had felt any qualms about the inadequacy and inefficiency of any of their paltry attempts to remove existing disabilities in their nation and to satisfy the very urgent demands of its working classes, they put all such feelings on one side, and supposed that at the moment of their

expected triumph the proverbially short memory of the populace, especially of an uneducated populace, would not remind them of the many ways in which the people's social and political aspirations were still unfulfilled. It would have been wiser, doubtless, on their part to resolve and prepare to use those moments of undeserved and unearned popularity as a propitious time for initiating the multitude of reforms for which the people asked; but that would have required an attitude of mind and a development of energy to which they were by heredity unaccustomed. The result was that they did nothing. To their intense surprise and unspeakable chagrin, they found that all the flattering things which had been said during the War about Spain's future political influence in Europe and the world proved to be mere vapourings which dissolved at once in the sun of an Allied victory, and that that influence itself was a mere will-o'-the-wisp which was barely seen in the dark hours of the night, and was lost at once in the bright rays of peace. Their opportunity was gone before it had ever taken material shape. Their failure to profit by the interregnum which Spain's perfectly comprehensible neutrality had put at their disposal for the reorganisation of Spanish life and finance, only increased the contempt already felt for them by their fellow-citizens, and the certainty that they would not count in the national upheaval, which could no longer be prevented by fair words alone.

The condition of Spain itself has meanwhile gone from bad to worse, because of the absence of measures to cope even temporarily with existing evils and the

neglect of rulers to take account of their urgency. Instead of assuming (which was the case in Spain, just as it has proved to be in every other country) that the extremists only represented a minority of even the manual labour class, they did not attempt to avoid trouble by the adoption of just legislation with regard to the much more general and justifiable claims for freedom made by the immense majority of workers. The authorities in Spain, both national and local, showed themselves more arrogant and unyielding than ever, and have consequently driven many moderates into the ranks of the extremists. They soon found that circumstances had changed, and that the people were no longer to be cowed by the old methods. The semi-military police and a great part of the Army are still prepared to go to the greatest extremes of brute force, whilst the authorities who direct them are either quaking in their skins or affecting contempt for the wishes of the populace.

Whilst Spanish politicians and soldiers are well aware of the black clouds, which almost cover their firmament and herald an approaching tempest, they disclaim all personal responsibility for the creaking timbers and torn sails of the ship of State. Their own existence and that of the people are hanging in the balance, and the wreckers are gathering on the rocks ahead to seize what booty they may. But the mass of the nation is too bewildered and too unaccustomed to express itself to know what to do or which way to turn, in order to avert the threatened catastrophe. With Oriental fatalism it goes about its daily tasks

and makes the most of present opportunities for enjoyment, leaving *mañana* to take care of itself. One thing may safely be asserted, however, and that is that when the crash comes the people may be trusted to see that few of the rulers will escape punishment for their criminal neglect of duty.

Nevertheless, there is still hope for the future. The storm clouds are themselves evidence that a breeze is blowing through the places filled with dead and dying; there is a rustling in the bones of a too long quiescent patriotism. There is a feeling that anything is preferable to the poisonous atmosphere in which Spaniards have lived until they had become accustomed to it, although it dried up their blood and destroyed their energy. Within the house of death there is the germ of a new generation filled with new ideas, determined to clear its native land of every vestige of the old state of things, to renew the furnishings and fittings of the old home, to overhaul and renovate the machinery of government, and to revive those glories, the memory of which only served to make its predecessors too proud to bestir themselves. *Young Spain is already making its presence felt.* I think that with its unrestrainable impetuosity and high ideals, youth will be able to break down in due time all barriers which obsolescent traditions or timorous minds may seek to erect in its path. He would be a bold man who took upon himself to predict the exact course of future events in that wonderful and beautiful, but paradoxical, semi-Oriental, and little understood country. For my part I have enough faith, enough confidence in the youth

of Spain, to believe that a great renaissance is at hand, which, even after trial by fire, if that must be, will restore to that ancient and lovable land the prosperity and happiness which it deserves, and for the attainment of which Nature in her bounty has endowed it with such ample means.

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY THE WHITEFRIARS PRESS, LTD., LONDON AND TONBRIDGE.