

with their unhealthy attitude, these presumptuous hangmen of the golden axe are certainly the most odious of all the fauna extant in Spain to-day.

The rich peasant, crafty and silent, who contemplates his slippers while he calculates interest rates and will stab a man in the back, is also frequently seen in the inns or buses with the priest or a member of the Guardia Civil. Their voices are like the essence of that repugnant nationalism that sometimes seems to permeate a whole village.

When the Republic arrived, one felt the birth of an impressive restlessness even in the most remote villages. But we do not know whether that wave will now subside for some time. The worst that we can wish for in Spain would be the peace that superficial and selfish interests are clamoring for, the strong hand that the suffering middle class is anxiously demanding and that the sinister and most evil elements desire.

I have seen peasants brought under the yoke again who praised their masters, but I have seen others who were even more rebellious, exalted, and terrible. Some are strong and

disciplined, confidently awaiting their hour, and some are fearful, indifferent, disillusioned, and defeated, even though the fire still burns in their souls. One doubts whether Spain will conquer, whether we have begun to grow, or whether we shall remain bound by contradictions. Are we at last taking up the journey we halted four centuries ago, are we doomed to wonder whether that past splendor was nothing more than a dream, or is the agony of an eternal 'Generation of '98' to have no end in Spain? We must put the matter to the test and find out if the salvation that the present generation is attempting is possible. For our youth to-day has faith,—faith or madness,—and they have already begun the experiment.

I traveled a great deal in Spain, and perhaps I learned to see things. I observed 'sad and wide' Spain eternally waiting, but I still do not know whether it is time for the music to begin or whether we should bow our heads again. Perhaps our generation is still a transitional one, and those who still are not sure of their road should keep their own council until the time comes to speak.

III. THE TWO ARISTOCRACIES

By GEORGE PENDLE

From the *Adelphi*, London Literary Monthly

RAMIRO DE MAEZTU sat in a small high room. Papers and books piled to the ceiling. By the door, a signed portrait of Primo de Rivera. 'It took me many years,' he said, 'to free my mind of the attractive untruths of the prophets of flux—Bergson, Shaw, and Co. Now I am royalist,

militarist, Catholic . . .' His monarcho-Catholic monologue proceeded, emphatic and aggressive as a monologue of Don Quixote himself, until I realized that his passion was that of the fanatic whose head has been turned by the Spanish sun—the sun that beats the Castilian plain day-long,

striking fire into the dry earth and into the minds of men.

Outside, carloads of *madrileños* were dashing back to town from the bull ring. Newsboys were beginning to shout the evening papers. I bought the Communist *Tierra* and read: 'To the worker, the idea of a republic signified social revolution. So the Republic was made with the blood of the proletariat. The proletariat were promised the land and freedom. But now, to their surprise, they find that the Republic has slipped into the hands of the same inept middle class that, since '98, imagines that Spain can be saved by speeches and gestures. The republic of the worker and the peasant has been betrayed.'

Studying Spain during the next few days, I realized that these two are the only worthy attitudes to the modern problem: the monarcho-Catholic attitude and the militant Communist attitude. The intermediate positions (named, in political jargon, 'labor,' 'radical,' 'centre') are untenable, abounding in inconsistencies and insincerities. The analysis of the situation is as follows:—

'Classicist in literature, royalist in politics, and . . . Catholic in religion,'—the monarcho-Catholics in Spain are absolutely consistent, having a definite traditional set of values by which to direct their thought and their action. The militant Communists are equally consistent and equally confident, with Marx and Lenin as touchstone and with the class war as an ever-present reality. The moderates, radicals, and laborites, on the other hand, are inconsistent and compromising and have no sense of direction whatsoever (unless the baldwinesque attitude of 'Safety First!'—*i.e.* 'Stop

the World!'—can be considered a direction). It is they who made the present Republic and who now wish to conserve it against the Right and the Left—in other words, they have become conservatives, though they bear Left-wing political labels. It is they who created the constitution by which the Cortes of 1933 was elected and who now repudiate the Cortes as being unrepresentative. It is they who swear by democracy and yet, though they are a mere faction, claim to be the nation—which is a dictatorial claim, anti-parliamentarian, anti-democratic.

II

The future lies with the extreme Right and the extreme Left. These two alone have an authentic social faith. They alone know what they want and have the guts to say what it is. The indecisive middle is the enemy of both; it embraces neither and hampers both. The monarcho-Catholics and the Communists are the aristocrats of the nation; the middle is the mass man, taking upon himself no duties, no responsibilities.

These are the active political forces. Behind them is the all-embracing vision of the philosophers. The philosophers—I refer, of course, to the group of José Ortega y Gasset—entered active politics in 1931 and withdrew in 1933. They entered active politics because they knew that their own vision was clear and decisive. But, having taken their seat in the first Cortes of the Republic, they found that it was the mass man—the man of confused vision and of no responsibility—who had hold of politics. To fight the mass man, the philosophers would have to identify themselves

either with the monarcho-Catholics or with the militant Communists. But their philosophic vision embraced both,—contrast the mass man, who is the negation of both,—transcended the rivalry, and penetrated beyond to a future that should result from the fertilization of the one by the other. So, rather than submit to the mass man and rather than mutilate their own personal unity by joining the one extreme or the other, they withdrew from active politics. Ultimately, there are only two aristocracies: the Catholic and the Communist. Since they are extremes, they often nearly meet. Spain incorporates both extremes in their purity and gives to both a vital impetus.

When Trotsky prophesied that Europe would 'go Red at both ends' (Russia and Spain), he must have realized that in Spain the issue is clearer than elsewhere. In Spain, the two aristocracies are clearly defined. Yet they almost meet—they are united in their self-discipline (the mass man has no values by which to discipline himself); and they are united in so far as they both postulate a system of life—each of them has a synthetic conception of life, whereas the mass man has none.

At the time of the conquest of South America, Spain was profoundly Catholic. Whereas the colonizers of North America were Protestants, rebels going out to affirm their individuality, their mind free and individual, the conquerors of South America were still mediæval, belonging to a period prior to the rupture between Church and State, part of the great Catholic

wholeness, not aggressive ego-units but prejustified organic parts. The inhabitants of North America appear now to be nearing their limit of expansion; they have become hard, ego-bound individuals, and the state founded upon their egos is itself a hard ego-bound entity. The inhabitants of South America, meanwhile, are awaiting the birth of the new organism of which they shall be parts, as they were parts of the great Catholic organism formerly.

Now the significant fact is that Spain, having sent out the *conquistadores* to South America, fell asleep. The Spanish race did not experience the Renaissance but slept through it, preserving its sense of the basic human realities, preserving a Catholic sense of 'the whole.' Spain has now suddenly awakened from the sixteenth century. Her people—the people of her two aristocracies—are struggling to subjugate the machinery (social, economic, industrial) of modern civilization to those basic human realities of which they, alone among western peoples, have preserved the intimate knowledge in their blood and in their mind. This struggle between a sixteenth-century consciousness and twentieth-century social forms throws into relief the conflicting elements. They are, ultimately, the same elements as we observe at work throughout the West; but in Spain they have an exceptional *netteté*, for in Spain the conditions of the struggle are exceptional and the human realities that have been sacrificed elsewhere to the fetish of mechanical progress have still their full vitality.

This vivid description of a fire in an Argentine oil town calls symbolic attention to a possible source of war.

FLAMES *over* Argentina

By HELMUT BACHMANN

Translated from the *Neue Freie Presse*
Vienna Liberal Daily

IT WAS a late spring. The Buenos Aires citizen read in his newspaper that water in the Rio had reached its lowest level, and the stricken farmers in the provinces were crying to the Government to provide them with money for seed. They had gained nothing from the rise in grain prices; they did not profit from the drought and bad harvest in the northern districts because they had sold their crops long ago and had completely exhausted their credit. In the south of the country and in the provinces of the Cordillera snow had ceased falling, and the first complaints of a heat wave were making themselves heard.

In the city one can already feel that winter is over. Most of the time one can go out without a coat, the damp cold has stopped, and the first clear sunny days with dry air are tempting the European visitors to go walking in the parks and along the Avenida Costanera that skirts the Rio. The real Argentines, however, are wait-

ing until the heat in the streets makes the city unbearable. The unemployed, who spent the first hours of the night begging for a little bread and something to drink, have gone to sleep in the niches of the houses and the doorways near the port. They need only two thicknesses of wastepaper to keep warm. Until recently they had to provide themselves, somehow or other, with an old sack in order not to freeze during the night and meet the same fate that had overtaken so many of their comrades.

They do not care if the local fire engines come howling through the streets with their sirens in full blast at four o'clock in the morning, heading northward up the broad Avenida Leandro N. Alem. They do not care whether a fire has broken out or whether the fire department is merely practising. The last guests in the night clubs, the waiters and the dancing girls, the chauffeurs and the newsboys who are in the streets at this late hour leave them in peace. Let the fire