

THE GERMAN MYTH IN SPAIN

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE OF THE OUTLOOK

In the military circles of Sweden and Spain the German myth persists with peculiar power. The army influence in both countries is such that this myth has had much to do with determining the policy of the two Governments—a policy, however, liable to change, as was shown by the recent Cabinet transformation in Sweden and by that quite recently in Spain. The problem seems thus to involve a conflict between the pro-German military element and the anti-German popular element. The ultimate victory in both countries, it is believed, will be a victory for democracy.—THE EDITORS.

“THE war, you see,” explained the diminutive curé with the expansive gesture, “is the will of God against iniquitous France. The most righteous Emperor of Germany is his instrument in this bitter task.” At my rather quizzical smile he added, reprovingly, “And a most loyal son of the Church.” I ventured to remonstrate that the Kaiser is commonly believed to be Protestant. But the curé passed the palm of his hand along the paling before him, as though smoothing out the wrinkles of earth, and corrected me by explaining that his Majesty was “obliged to fulfill the outward formalities imposed by the state, but that in private he performed the rites of the Church.” Could William II have been confused with James II in the mind of this simple man? As he spoke my eye wandered along the jagged, yellow teeth of the Saracenic battlements surrounding the city of Toledo, only a few steps away from where we stood on the steps of the little church. In world thought, it seemed to me, we were at least a century distant.

Several conversations of this sort awakened my curiosity to become better acquainted with this new Spanish saint. In the course of a few weeks I found him reappearing—now in the words of a prelate, now in the eloquence of a statesman, and often enough in the columns of certain newspapers. This myth in the mind of the naïve parish curé I found to be the simple interpretation of a sentiment propagated by the highest clerical circles of Spain. Could two peoples, the Spanish and the German, be more diametrically opposite in temperament, mode of life, and in political ideals? But the Spanish Germanophile exists and is a person of considerable activity and influence.

This outlying Toledo parish I have mentioned gave me a typical cross-section of village thought in Spain. It resembled that of a neighboring commune where when the church contributions fell in arrears the curé announced that without a more generous response by noon of the following day darkness would fall upon the earth. Payment was not forthcoming, and the eclipse (as indicated in the curé’s almanac) darkened the earth. His flock are still marveling at the power of their *padre*. We chatted with the villagers in the low-raftered, oil-permeated little inn. They took us at first for Germans, “there are so many about.” Most believed that Germany would win because she had a large army and was fighting against evil, unbelieving France. But the village baker, also mayor, and a man of more independent spirit, disagreed in favor of the Allies. He was convinced that France and England would win, he said, “because the *padre* had said they wouldn’t.” “Then, you see,” he continued, “our Queen is English.” A little murmur of approval about us suggested that the baker had made a point.

Hand in hand for Germany with the clergy go the Carlists—to-day, after the name of their present pretender, Jaimists. They are a diminishing but active group of ultra-Conservatives who dream of re-establishing the palmy days of absolutism, divine rights, and the Inquisition. Aside from the progressive reigning Alfonso XIII, the principal obstacle in their path is that their own Don Jaime shows little desire to become the instrument of such reaction. He has lived long in Paris and London, was an officer in the Russian army, and has no intention of ever returning to Spain, to use his own expression, “unless it be to save the state from anarchy.” Since the war he has been a virtual prisoner in Austria, given freedom of his movements only on the advent of his friend, the present Emperor. But in Spain his followers continue to count time only by the intervals between one Carlist revolution and the next. Vasquez de Mella, most eloquent of Spanish orators, is the soul and voice of the party, as well as the leading defender of the German cause. His knowledge of foreign affairs suggests the frequentation of dark and stately mansions of Madrid, where small, select circles gather and contemplate the diminished splendors of the

former empire. As they brood over the ruins left by Napoleon on his march through Spain they murmur that Germany “*no nos a hecho nunca dano*” (has never harmed us). They dream of a new world empire, the great obstacle of which is England. Perfidious Albion, indeed, is the subject of their *leitmotif*. To quote Mella: “Who is it checks our legitimate aspirations to Gibraltar? England. Who prevents the absorption of Portugal in a Greater Spain? England. And who finally destroyed our relations with the Spanish Americas? England.” Automatically these Carlists, though there are some exceptions, become Germanophiles just as they needs have become Turco-philos, or would become Chinophiles were China engaged in the task of crushing their arch-enemy. More than that, Germany (and here the myth appears again) would help Spain regain her old position as a world Power. Indeed, the Kaiser and Don Jaime would rule the world. “There is a pan-Germanism, a pan-Slavism, and we are the prophets of the new pan-Iberianism.”

The modern Don Quixote reads in the military comment of his favorite reactionary paper that “the French cavalry effects a raid on Russian Poland” or that “the Russian army, by a victory in the lower Caucasus, threatens to open the direct route between Petrograd and Berlin.” (These are actual quotations from Spanish papers.) In noble indignation Quixote dons his armor, now a trifle rusty, and goes out into the world to defend the honor of the fair Dulcinea—now Fräulein. She passed him once without a glance, but Don Quixote carried away in his heart the sparks of smoldering adoration, which now, in this moment of her need, have burst into flaming passion. He sees the Kaiser in shining armor with sword in hand. Marin, one of the Quixotes, in private life Director of the National Library, exclaimed: “I am a Germanophile as a Spaniard and as an admirer of all that is noble and grand. Germany has always honored our literature. And to-day how can I but be enthusiastic for Germany, who almost alone faces hordes from half the nations of the earth? Hers is the *sublime spectacle* of a nation winning victory—worthy achievement of her mighty Kaiser and of the heroic valor of her army.” This is Cervantes at his best. I emphasize the expression “sublime spectacle” as a key to the attitude of many Spanish toward the war. My esteemed friend Gomez Carillo, editor of “El Liberal,” exclaimed when I imagined I had found a clue to Spanish public opinion: “My dear fellow, in this war most of us are like the spectators at a bull-fight. We wave our arms, shout, come away, and write about it; but at bottom we are simply trifling with something which does not touch us.”

The army is ardently Germanophile. Most of the military critics who influence public opinion through the press are officers in active service. Many of them contrive to make a German victory out of every bulletin. Some have passed a term of study in Germany. All have been fed with German theory. They wear the pointed helmet, the *Feldgrau*, and their lancers are so faithfully uniformed that they might have stepped out of the Prussian Guard. This active group is a considerable reinforcement to the clerical and Carlist elements.

Pio Baroja is a vigorous, erratic radical of a different school. He too is an ardent admirer of German methods. He followed enthusiastically the German advance in Flanders. “May they come to Spain,” was his prayer, “and do to the clergy here what they did to the Belgian clergy—hang some and silence the others! The country also can profit by the novelty of a little good government.”

Another Quixote, Francisco de Carracido, Director of the Cisneros Institute of Madrid, declared: “I am a Germanophile because I see in Germany a regenerating force for our country. Germany has given all humanity the highest example of good government.” He makes this extraordinary conclusion: “Ger-

many is the nation least foreign to us. From earliest times we have been in sympathy with her. Our great Charles V was at the same time Emperor of Germany."

The apex of adulation is reached by Vincent Gay, a professor at the University of Valladolid. He has written tomes on tomes about German thought, institutions, and aspirations. He was a guest of the Government on a visit to that country, and unkind rumor even has it that the German Embassy in Madrid purchased the first two thousand of his books. At the time of the disorder created by the exhibition of the Raemaekers cartoons held recently in Madrid, Gay was one of the most violent opponents. A paper of the organizers came out the following morning with a long and purely fictitious notice of the death of Vincent Gay in a duel with a Francophile. The story described the combatants lunging at each other "with such ferocity that two blades were broken." But one thrust reached home and the unhappy Gay fell to the ground. I quote a sample of Gay's grandiose Spanish.

"A great bond, cultural and material, has been established since the war between Spain and Germany. Spain will become the path of transit for the new lines of world commerce—Euro-American and Germano-Oriental. We must prepare to receive the favors which Germany will bestow upon us for not having been among her enemies. The triumph of Germany is indubitable."

Don Quixote has his part, too, in Spanish war literature. A book of the first year of the war, entitled "The Secret of Lord Kitchener," is by an author who explains that an inspiration came to him and he completed the writing of the book in twenty days. After Great Britain receives a crushing defeat the Germans disembark on the island, while George V flees to Morocco and puts himself under the protection of Muley Yussuf. Another, "Spain as a Great Power," is even more pretentious.

Spain enters the war on the side of Germany, and marches fifty thousand men across the Pyrenees. Here the French territorials are easily scattered and the Spanish army continues its victorious march northward. While the Republican Government flees to Brest, German and Spanish troops meet and fraternize at Poitiers. In the subsequent peace signed at Washington Spain secures most of French Africa, but at home magnanimously declines to annex Rousillon (the little corner of France where Catalan is spoken), "in order not to sow seeds of future discord."

The German myth has flourished in Spain as in no other neutral country. But France is the only country with which even the privileged few have even a speaking acquaintance. Germany, far off, unknown, is to the Spanish the land of wonderful organizations, armies, and pomp. To show how limited is this knowledge, in 1913 in the National Library of Madrid there were only something over a hundred readers of German, as compared with thirteen hundred French. It is the fashionable thing to compare erratic Spanish public administration with German efficiency. There is no need for great precision in the contrast, because the chances are that there will be no one to contradict you. Benevente, a brilliant but rather superficial writer, whose style is a direct inheritance from Molière and Marivaux, none the less has come out loudly for the German cause as against France. Speaking of the Germans, he declares: "If such grandeur of a people achieving national unity is called barbarism, let us imitate these barbarians." That he knows neither Germany nor its language in no degree dampens his enthusiasm for the German myth. But such outbursts are harmless enough because the whole war struggle seems to the Spanish people across the Pyrenees little more than a distant spectacle in no way preferable to their present tranquillity.

Madrid, Spain.

SANFORD GRIFFITH.

THE SOUL OF A MUNITIONS PLANT

BY WILLIAM E. BROOKS

It is not merely a munitions plant whose soul is here discovered; it is, like the Krupp works at Essen, Germany, the iron works of Schneider & Co. at Le Creusot, France, and the Vickers plants of England, one of the greatest steel works in the world. The author is a neighbor of this great corporation, and a clergyman.—THE EDITORS.

IN a narrow mountain valley of central Pennsylvania beside a broken dam stand the ruins of an old forge. The motorist shoots by them without a glance on his way to a well-known rod and gun club up the creek. Yet that forge made history. There was made the famous Sligo iron with which they covered the monitors in Civil War days. There also was made economic history, for in the relation there established between master and man is to be found a solution of most of the labor troubles of the country. It was, in brief, a human relation. One cared for the other, one thought of the other. The thought took a most practical way of manifesting itself. The big house stood at the foot of the mountain not far from the forge. There was not a case of sickness in the homes around but was visited by its gentle mistress. One of the sons, who was afterward to head the firm, took a medical course in Philadelphia that he might give "first aid" intelligently to his own men. An old leather-bound time-book of the forge stands before me. Every item of human interest in the community is recorded in it—accidents, injuries, births, deaths, an occasional fight or frolic, a religious revival, or a militia review. Not a charcoal-burner out on the mountains, not a teamster hauling the heavy blooms, not one of the many workmen about the forge, who did not have a share in the thoughts of the forge-master. His daughters taught the Sunday-school, of which he was the head; out of his liberal purse came the salary of the pastor, who gave one-third of his time to this portion of his widely scattered parish; and the same purse paid for the little white church that stands still half hidden and quiet among the trees—like the big house, living on its memories.

Long ago the forge ceased to hammer out its blooms. Long ago the charcoal pits ceased to smolder on the hills. The dam is broken, the houses where the workers lived have been pulled down or have fallen. A white-haired old lady, the last daughter

of the family, still lives in the big house where lived her fathers, and ministers as they did to the wide country-side. The house is all that is left. For Bessemer steel drove charcoal iron out of the market, and in its passing more things changed than a metallurgist will describe. The new steel companies led the van in that surprising development of great corporations which was one of the economic phenomena of the last generation. And among the changes wrought no change was so startling and so dangerous as that in the relation between master and man. So different was it from that which obtained at the mountain forge that the man at the head and the man at the work had nothing in common but hate. The great corporations seemed like mighty machines, cruel and relentless, demanding the most of labor for the least return, and caring nothing about the conditions of that labor—maiming, burning, killing men with their cruelly careless fashion of doing the work. The only weapons that were effective against them were the strike and the riot, and one of the things that resulted was the charge, freely repeated, that a corporation had no soul.

But late years have seen a great change. Many things have forced the steel kings to see that they were wrong and that the old forge-master was right. Their disregard of the lives of their workers was economically unsound, and was costing them dollars. Entirely apart from the fact of compensatory legislation, they discovered for themselves the thing he knew, that a contented man, well-housed, well-fed, sober, and healthy, is an infinitely greater producer than his opposite. In consequence they instituted welfare departments, and they tell you frankly that they did this, not as charity, but as good business. But whatever is good business is in the end *good* business, and because it is at last doing *good* business the modern corporation is in a fair way to find its soul.

Over in another valley of Pennsylvania is a modern forge.