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REV. DR. CAHILL

ON SPANISH AFFAIRS.

The admirers of the noble Spanish race, the lovers of national liberty, and the advocates of Christianity, will rejoice at the approach of a new era in the history of Spain. During the last forty-three years (since the restoration of Ferdinand the Seventh) the public mind of Europe has been kept in a constant alternation of indignation and pity by the foreign intrigues and the internal civil commotion which have degraded and disorganized the Peninsula. And the more intensely this general sympathy and anger have heretofore been felt, the more exuberant is the present exultation at the prospect of a speedy release from all the evils, external and domestic, which have hitherto oppressed that fine country. The narrative of her past trials, and of her present and future hope, is full of political, civil, and religious interest, and can be told in very few words.

When the terrors excited by the plunder, devastation, and blood, of the first French Revolution had partly subsided; and when Napoleon had subdued (what he considered) the immediate enemies of the new Republic, he built a new Imperial throne from the wreck of the old Dynasty; and putting a new crown on his own head, and placing himself on this new Imperial seat, he cast his eagle glance all over Europe, to make new conquests, to acquire new dominions, and to bestow new crowns on the heads of new men, who were to govern as his friends several of the surrounding nations. These new kings were (as he hoped) to be a kind of "Cordon Royal" to surround, to protect, and to give permanent stability and undying succession to this new Imperial kingdom. As a matter of course, Spain was the first country on which he laid his magic wand, and which, in the year 1808, he converted with a single touch into a royal residence for his brother Joseph. He added intrigue to conquest, and (as it is said) he compelled, or he bribed Charles the Fourth, then King of Spain, to abdicate in his favor. Such a dangerous neighbor for England, by land and by sea, put all her army and navy in active motion; and after six years of deadly struggle in the Peninsula, guided by Sir John Moore and Lord Wellington, she expelled the French from the possession of Spain in 1813, and restored Ferdinand (son of Charles the Fourth) to the crown of his ancestors.

On the return of the legitimate King to the old throne, the country presented an altered aspect; a sad reverse: a fatal change in all her former political, civil, commercial and religious relations. The presence of nearly two hundred thousand men for so many years in calamitous warfare had dissolved all the moral bonds of her social framework, and she went to pieces in disorganization. The desecration of her temples by the French: the plunder of the French army, taught lessons of irreligion and disorder which plunged the national mind into hitherto unknown crime; while the doubt of the stability of the throne, the uncertainty who should be the future King, weakened their proverbial allegiance to the Spanish line. When to this state of things we add the revolutionary feelings of their neighbors the French, the overthrow of the Bourbons in that kingdom, their hatred of their late monarch, who had sold his throne to Napoleon, it is easy to comprehend how the whole Spanish mind lean to those organic and violent changes into which the popular feeling when uncontrolled and overbalanced, will ever fall in precipitate confusion. This order of things was increased by the suspension of their agriculture during the war, and by their ruined commerce. Under pretence of demolishing all places which might serve as points of defence for the French, Lord Wellington threw down all their factories; and although the French armies plundered without remorse, yet this loss was trifling and transitory: while Wellington by the policy alluded to, inflicted a fatal, a permanent injury on their trade, from which it has never since recovered.

In this state of the popular mind some few leaders of the people called together what was heretofore known in Spain as the National Assembly, and in the year 1812 they devised and published a new Constitution, fully as democratic as the French Constitution promulgated in Paris in 1791. The principles of this new Constitution overturned the old monarchical regime, which was almost an absolute Government, crippled and limited the ancient power of the throne, and laid the foundation of permanent contentions between the people and the future King, on his return in 1814. Besides, the national mind was demoralized: they hated Ferdinand for his rudeness and treachery; and all the rebellious, the needy, the discontented, the irreligious (as is ever the case) longed for change: and hence arose the deep, permanent source of opposition between the throne and the advocates of the new Constitution.

Here commences the intrigue of England in

Spanish affairs. The new constitution legalized two Chambers, like our British Senate: the first called Proceres, contained the Spanish nobility with some members named by the Crown: the second, called the Cortes, was composed of citizens under the following circumstances of election:—

In Spain there are two classes of electors—viz., the electors in cities or municipalities, called the municipal bodies; and the electors in provinces, called Juntas. Now comes the basis for intrigue in the nomination of the Cortes. Here it is. The Cortes are elected by the Juntas for three years: and the Juntas are elected by the municipal bodies; and now the inquiry comes—namely, how are the municipal bodies themselves elected? They are elected by a process nearly resembling Universal Suffrage, within the boundary of the municipality; it is something very nearly resembling our corporation elections, with a more extended suffrage. It is a clear case therefore, that the corporate bodies of Spain have *bona fide* (through the Juntas) the nomination of every member of the Cortes: it is idle to talk of the Juntas, because they are themselves the nominees of the corporations. To gain an ascendancy over these municipal bodies, and therefore to command a majority in the Spanish Cortes, became the earnest, the all-absorbing aspiration of the British Cabinet; for 20 years, that is, from 1813 to 1833, she struggled in this difficult, perfidious mission; and at last she succeeded; the ruined monasteries, the confiscated church property, and the expelled Religious, can bear calamitous testimony on this point to the wandering Catholic inquirer. If Spain had an agricultural representation like England, Don Carlos would now be on the throne, and Religion would not now have to deplore the deep wound which has been inflicted on the Gospel; but a town representation is always needy, few, and easily corrupted; and irreligion, immoral license, love of change, and English money, developed this calamitous fact in the late melancholy state of Spanish municipal slavery and corruption.—One glance at the machinery of these municipal elections will suffice.

The Prime Minister, through "the Intendant" of cities, ordered a printed list of all the citizens entitled to vote; but secretly sent a manuscript list to the place of registry; this manuscript list could leave out, at pleasure, any number of persons from the printed list; or add, at pleasure, any number of fictitious persons to the manuscript list; and thus (as is evident) the Government could carry at pleasure the election of favorite members throughout all the municipalities of Spain. With such a man as Espartero at the head of the Cabinet, the Press dare not publish this injustice; and wo to the individual in the city who would raise his voice against this mockery of Universal Suffrage. In a similar way the officers of the army were nominated in the interest of this illegality; and thus the Spanish Senate, and the Spanish Army were corrupted into the suicides of their own national honor and national liberties. Don Carlos, the whole country population, and the virtuous citizens, were far more powerful in numbers and property; but in the face of such legislation, in the teeth of the army, they were by these laws the silent spectators and the dumb victims of an injustice which has no parallel in Spanish history, and can only be equalled by the calamitous records of unfortunate Ireland. As England claimed the victory over Napoleon at Waterloo, and restored the Spanish King, she also claimed the right of governing the Spanish throne and regulating the entire legislation of the kingdom.

Long and successful intrigue resulted at length in events which shock the unlearned in history, and which to the trained politician are as much the natural consequence of moral premises, as the fruit on the loaded branch is the effect of the laws of universal vegetable economy. After 20 years' labor, the Cortes contained a majority against the legitimate heir of the Crown, and against the inviolability of the Church property; and, therefore, in 1833, one law was passed against the succession of Don Carlos to the throne: and a second act was carried, almost with acclamation, for the sequestration of all the Church property of the nation. And lest any one should doubt that this legislation did not come from England, Sir De Lacy Evans, at the head of ten thousand men (the British Legion) appeared before San Sebastian, and in a pitched battle, finally beat and put to flight the supporters of Don Carlos. Accordingly, all the Convents, male and female (one Dominican Convent excepted) were closed: seventy-five religious of all Orders were driven from their cloisters, the men with thirteen pence a day, the women with tenpence! and this pittance again was refused after eight months! Hundreds died of destitution; hundreds perished from depression and trial; and there are instances recorded where many were refused alms in the cities where they once clothed the orphan and fed the poor. In studying this picture, and one can see that it is

an exact copy of an original taken from English history; one can read in all this record the *fac simile* of the reigns of Henry, of Edward, of Elizabeth. It is quite an English plan; it is an English branch engrafted on a Spanish trunk; it must produce an unnatural shoot, and bring forth bitter fruit. And so it has done: and it would, in the natural order of things, have reduced Spain to the heresies, the infidelities, the crimes, the abominations of its parent, England, if a merciful Providence had not reversed her destinies.

Napoleon the Third, therefore, has been called to retrace the steps of Napoleon the First, to unteach the doctrines of his uncle's revolution, to Christianize the moral disorder of his policy, and to free old Hispania from the greatest evil of her existence, viz., the cruel, perfidious domination of England. I am enabled this moment to produce the *very contract*, by which England bound herself to advance the monies necessary to defend Ferdinand against his brother and against his adherents on the condition, that the Church property should be confiscated, as a further guarantee for the repayment of the funds thus advanced.

Spain has now in 1857 shaken off her perfidious ally: in her late elections all was order, truth and justice; the French press has lauded her unembarrassed franchise: members faithful to the national interests will in future be returned to the Cortes, and the French Eagle will spread its protecting wings over the Pyrenees, and give assurance and liberty to future free Spanish legislation. In 1839 her population was fourteen millions: she can feed and support forty millions: her territory is nearly as large as France, and the lover of true liberty and true religion must rejoice, when he can, in the year 1857, trace on the map of Europe, the Empire of Austria, Bavaria, Italy, Naples, France, all united: while the old disturber of Europe is a fallen sycophant at the gates of the Tuilleries.

D. W. C.

Ballyroan Cottage, Feb. 26.

PROSELYTISM AT WORK IN IRELAND.

PART IV.

(From the Weekly Register.)

One day in the week—I think a Saturday—is set apart by the mission superintendent to receive and read the reports made up by his several agents, recounting all the "mission" events of the past six days. Most of these men have employed the previous evening in concocting some plausible circumstances, which fills up an interesting chapter for the morrow, and may in due time obtain the honor of a place in the monthly records, and perchance in the annual report. I have every reason to know that the superintendents have detailed many fabrications of this sort; and after a great show of remonstrance with the blushing story-tellers, suffered them to pass current as facts, if not positive, probable. The agent takes a note of everything which has occurred during the week to arrest his missionary attention or excite his missionary zeal. If nothing of a more than merely common nature transpires to enable him to make a creditable "note," his invention comes to the rescue, or his imagination aids him to make a very "good thing" out of a very poor occurrence. Each "reader" has a direct personal interest in excelling every other reader in this matter of note-making. The reason will be obvious when the reader has obtained an "idea" of how the "notes" rivet the attention and arouse the admiration, or call forth the censure of those in authority. In the first paper of this series a mission-room for class meetings was sketched. Let the reader fancy that same apartment converted into the assembly-room for the agents. The same fat, flabby looking person who conducted the class meeting, sits supreme over the readers. He wears a supercilious smile, and having opened the business of the day, has a good joke or smart saying for every one. The room is scantily filled, for the readers do not number more than 25, and there is space for 200. Of the 25 men comprising the group encircling the superintendent, three fourths have been, at some or other time, Catholics of some sort or other. The principal "lay agent" is an old Calvinist from the North—a practised text quoter—crammed with "bits" of controversy, and as shallow in intellect as he is warm in heart. The other principal "lay agents" resemble their chief in littleness of knowledge, but do not equal him as a man or a quoter of texts. The "run" of the agents might have been picked from a gang of turf cutters on the Bog of Allan. It is a rude, ignorant herd, that uncouth one, gathered round the table at which sits the good-humoured superintendent. And this lot of illiterate, ill-mannered, ill-favored, ill-famed fellows, is weekly loosened on the Catholic poor to tempt them to Protestantism! Near the Parson's elbow on the table, are piled the reports given in by the agents, and in due order the clerical functionary opens them—one by one; glancing carefully

over each to ascertain where there happens to be anything "particular." Usually a "God-fearing" stranger, who chances to be in the neighborhood, walks in to hear how the "good work" progresses, and it is on the occasion of a few such visitors that the best spirit of these assemblies is evoked. As each "journal" (for so I think the publications are called), comes into the parson's hand, he calls out the agent's name, who becomes a staring listener until the ordeal is quite past and his journal is laid down in peace. The Parson, upon finding an account of an "interesting conversation," reads it aloud for the edification of all, and publicly praises the writer according to the qualities of the matter which has been presented to notice. On this account it becomes the agent to do his best towards furnishing an incident which will demand particular attention, and call out the honor of a special mention. With the class of men in whom such a feeling is stirred up, there is nothing in the heart implanted likely to resist the desire to invent or falsify at any risk, provided the end in view be gained. Were the superintending Parson of the Dublin mission to recount his experience, it would bear most convincingly and painfully on that point. I have been made aware of sufficient myself to be satisfied that the best "agents"—they whose reports were invariably the most interesting and applauded—they whose names were in all assemblies—seldom, if ever, took further pains about getting up their attractive details, than a lounge in the Phoenix Park, and a long sitting in a public tavern. A distinguished friend, upon whose authority I cannot hesitate to rely, told me that on one occasion he was present at a meeting of these agents, held in some part of Dublin, when the journal of a man named Burke was read, and gave the greatest delight to all who listened. With minuteness this popular agent described a scene, and related a controversial conversation which, if real, did credit to his natural powers of description, and his polemical acumen, and if merely imaginary, did credit to his ingenuity and cunning. Every one, it seems was beyond measure pleased with this production of the vulgar Munster man, and most of all the Parson, who considered the matter of importance enough to be specially preserved for special presentation to the specialities of the Society. But, alas! in the midst of the exultation, and while too elated under the pressure of his congratulating comrades, the fool let it appear that it was all "a sham." Upon inquiry it turned out, that this, like many another "most astonishingly interesting" event, was imagined in a tavern, the agent imbibing his whisky punch and pious inspirations in equal proportions. I am told this same man was since twice "broken" for inebriety, and twice restored to teach poor benighted Catholics. This man is merely alluded to as a specimen of how the agents work upon their employers and upon their own craft. As a reader, he was paid about one pound a week. At his occupation, as a farm laborer, he might occasionally earn as much as six shillings a week. I do not say that the difference would justify me in concluding that this was indirect bribery; but it is worth remembering and that all, or nearly all the "agents" are similarly circumstanced.

As soon as the superintendent Parson has completed his examinations of the "journals," and endeavored to put in order the irregular character of the compositions which have merited special favor, he lectures his "Readers" upon some dogma of Catholicity, upon which they have to lay great emphasis in their conversations during the coming week. That this advice, or lecture, has taken full effect, you can learn by listening on that day week to the journals, when that topic most prevailing for the intervening few days. When the lecture has ended a conversation is started, and as the most inquiring Reader is the greater favourite with the Parson, many become candidates for his regard, by dunning him with "ready cut" questions, for which they take any answers he offers, whether they have meaning in them or not. The Parson is an easy-going, thick-headed man, puffed with that sort of vanity disdainful show, but ambitious of admiration. His failings are well known to his agents, and no man seems better able to play the sycophant than the sly fellows who pocket the gold of England to mock the Protestantism they are paid to propagate. The Parson's blunders are traits of genius—his additions, specimens of a great mind—his silence upon a knotty question, a token of his sagacity—his shrug, or his smile, or his wink, each in turn denotes his wisdom, his generosity, his wit. The man swallows the fulsome flattery with which these wily wretches feed him, and when his "smoothed-down back" is turned away, the grin of derision which bids it "good bye" touches not the self-satisfied front which leads it homeward. The hypocrisy fostered in the agents of the Mission Society has its parallel in the Reformation humbug which they hire themselves to carry out.

CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN THE GAMBIA ISLANDS.

(From the U. S. Catholic Miscellany.)

We have been kindly favored with a copy of "Le Moniteur de la Flotte" a Paris paper, of Feb. 13, which contains some interesting particulars relating to the wonderful moral revolution produced in those islands by the labors of the French Catholic Missionaries. What a contrast between the fruits of the vineyard there planted by them, and the other harvest reaped, at no great distance, by the missionaries of Old and New England! Both have wonderful results to show; but how different in character! One people daily perishing, decimated by sin and disease; the other, improved in worldly prosperity, elevated in the scale of civilization, blessed with a thousand new means of increasing social happiness, and what is more, so far advanced in the practise of virtues, as to shame the population of Christian Europe!

The letter, which we condense rather than translate, is addressed to the editors of the *Moniteur*, and is dated July 7th, 1856.

"I have just come from an interesting excursion to the Gambia Islands. At Mangareva I spent nine days, and left it enchanted with what I saw. No impartial man can fail to be penetrated by a profound admiration of the blessed influences of Christianity, when he contrasts the present state of Mangareva and the neighboring islands with that of others less frequented in the same archipelago of Pomotou, where the inhabitants, yet in prey to idolatry and barbarism are wasting away in continual wars, human sacrifices and cannibalism. In the Christian Islands the natives are sincerely attached to the Catholic religion, and to the good Fathers by whom they have been instructed; they possess the frank, invincible faith and docility of the early Christians. In the largest island there is a convent of *Religieuses* which may be said to furnish a home for a great portion of the female population. The young girls receive there their education, while their elders, married or unmarried, employ their time in devotional exercises, or in cultivating the neighboring gardens, in which strange vegetables from Valpariso or Tahiti have been acclimatized. Many of the boys and able-bodied men are engaged, under the direction of the Missionaries, in a large manufactory on the north side of the island, where good and solid clothes are made out of native wool and cotton. The rest are employed at work on a large tract of land in the neighborhood. This, and the grounds of the Convent may be regarded as model-farms. In the Island of Aukena, there is a boy's school, conducted by two French laymen (one of them former professor in the College of Rochfort) who have with generous zeal devoted themselves to this mission. A college, or boarding Academy on a larger scale is now in course of erection. The school has been most successful. I have seen and examined some of its pupils, who spoke French fluently, and answered correctly in ciphering, parsing and geography. In some of the classes composed of very small children, I found them able to read, and well-grounded in the four first operations of arithmetic: in the higher classes I found others who could parse Latin correctly.

As regards material comfort, the inhabitants are well dressed and live in substantial stone houses, with beds and furniture of their own manufacture. Many of them, under the training of two Brothers of the Mission, have become good masons and joiners. They have by degrees been brought to the habit of daily labor; this is however, not unfrequently interrupted by popular festivals in which the natives amuse themselves with dancing singing, games, and other amusements."

How much wiser, even humanly speaking is the Catholic missionary than its sectarian rival! Teach the child of nature that it is a sin to dance or sing, and you make him a mooping, gloomy, wicked Christian, ten times worse than if he had remained a savage. The theocracy that imposed Connecticut Blue Laws on some wretched nations of Polynesia, found it necessary afterwards to eke out its annual budget by a revenue derived from native prostitution.

After some further remarks on the many ameliorations, improvements of the soil introduction of foreign plants, esculents, &c., for consumption or exportation, and other such advantages, which the people owe to the kindness of those disinterested heralds of the Cross, who are not laboring for themselves or their families, but content with food and raiment, devote their whole time and energy to the temporal and eternal welfare of those converted Islanders, the writer goes on to describe the moral condition of the inhabitants.

"Drunkenness, theft and debauchery are here unknown. The government is quite patriarchal, and resembles that of a family. The King, Gregorio, is a man of cold timid disposition, who willingly asks and almost always follows the advice of the Missionaries. He is the dispenser of justice. Generally he associates with himself the chief of Rikitea, if the accused belong to another