

# What Spain Thinks on the World War

By W. W. SWANSON.

Most students of world politics have been puzzled concerning Spain's attitude to the present world war, and the ordinary observer is quite bewildered. The Kaiser's U-boat was welcomed at Carthage with flowers and music, and King Alphonso granted a private audience to Germany's special ambassador. The Madrid Press has been, almost without exception pro-German in outlook and sympathy. The Madrid populace also, have been pronouncedly anti-British. On the other hand Barcelona and Southern Spain have been equally pro-Ally, and have lost no opportunity to bring aid and comfort to the opponents of Germany. All this is, as has been said, bewildering and confusing; but it is really susceptible of a very simple explanation.

The opinions of the Spanish people in this devastating war are largely determined by home politics. They cannot, and do not forget their Latin affiliations with France, and their alliance with England during the Napoleonic struggle; but there are other feelings that move them more deeply. Spain is, in fact, undergoing a more or less peaceful revolution herself, a revolution that is tempered by riots and strikes. The conflict is between the Church on the one hand and atheism and revolutionary Socialism on the other.

## Domestic Politics in Spain.

It is for this reason that the invasion of Belgium, the breaking of treaties, and the trampling of international obligations underfoot, excite little interest in either party in Spain. It is considered that such things are beside the main issue. The Spanish Liberals wish, taking things by and in the large, to re-organize Spanish society on a pagan basis; to separate Church and State; to destroy the monasteries; and to trust to secular education and material advancement to raise the status of the people. The Conservatives, on the contrary, wish to consolidate the interests of Church and State; preserve and strengthen the institutional work of the monasteries; and inculcate Christian ideals and principles among the people. Within each of these two great parties there are minor groups willing to compromise on this or that particular issue, or holding the most extreme and irreconcilable views; but, in general, the nation is divided broadly on the lines indicated above. It will be seen, therefore, that even this most stupendous of all world conflicts must fail to unite Spain on any all-embracing, comprehensive national policy.

## Spanish Liberals pro-Ally.

The moderate Liberals in Spain are strongly pro-British, if not pro-Ally. They see in England the very fountain-head of liberalism, in trade and commerce, in education, in religion and in politics. They know that England is the mother of parliaments and the home of free speech and a free press. This group of what may be termed Liberal-Conservatives seek to reproduce like conditions in Spain—moderation in politics, toleration in religion and freedom of assembly and speech, whether spoken or written. On the other hand, there is the extreme laissez-faire group within the party that looks to France for inspiration and support. It is openly irreligious—or, perhaps, non-religious—and demands the abolition of all Church teaching and influence, the entire separation of Church and State. It has the Latin outlook, the Latin poise and balance, the Latin freedom from sentimentality, and the Latin love of self-expression and self-sufficiency. It hates Teutonism and all its ways—its order, its domineering spirit, its pedantic thoroughness, its intense and strenuous living, and the crushing burden it places upon life. Germany demands a place in the sun for a united nation; the Spanish and Latin free-thinker wishes a place in the sun for himself, in which he, more than all others, knows how to bask and taste the savor of life. They abhor the tyranny and autocracy of the German governmental scheme of things, and would take the field to-morrow in behalf of French culture and civilization if they could but gain control of the administration and military forces of Spain.

## The Influence of Spanish Reactionaries.

Opposed to both these groups are the Conservatives and Clericals, who feel themselves drawn to the Teutonic Powers—to Germany because it is superbly governed from above and because the will of the common people is ignored; and to Austria because it, together with Spain, is the most Catholic of all modern States. In addition, the historic memories and associations of the great past have forged a strong link between the two nations. They hate republican France and its free-thinking politicians, and refuse to forgive her the injury which, in their opinion, she has wrought to the Church. They do not forget, moreover, that in the Spanish-American war England broke up an European coalition, with Germany at its head, which proposed to come to the aid of Spain. These Conservatives know full well that Germany rattled the sword in her own interests, disliking to see Cuba, the Philippines and other fair places fall in the hands of a strong Power; but, nevertheless, Germany was Spain's only friend in that conflict. The Clericals dislike Protestant England, and refuse to forgive or forget the conditions under which she seized Gibraltar. And as the Conservative-Clerical group control the army, navy and the administration they are able to give, if not active, at least negative, support to the Central Powers.

## Catholic Belgium and Orthodox Russia.

Strange as it may appear, although Belgium presents almost the sole instance of a modern State being ruled by a Clerical party, the official class in Spain extends that unhappy country little sympathy and no support. For Catholic Belgium has also become tainted with the free-thinking of France. The Socialists have grown in numbers by leaps and bounds, and they cherish a deep antipathy to the old, official and autocratic element in Spain. When the free-thinking publicist and philanthropist, the revolutionary Ferrer, was executed in Spain a few years ago, Brussels set up a monument to his memory; and there it remained, despite Spanish protests, until the Germans came and, at the order of the Kaiser, had it removed. The Spanish autocracy, in fact, does not forget Spain's campaigns in the Low Countries, and the policy of frightfulness that was then followed. And they know full well that neither the Dutch nor the Belgians have forgotten those bloody days either, when Spain sought to impose its Kultur on the civilization of Europe. In a certain subtle sense, therefore, there is an affinity between Germany's aspirations now and what Clerical Spain endeavored to accomplish centuries ago; and although German Protestant Kultur is, if anything, harder and more unyielding and more brutal than was Spain's, yet the fundamental issue in each case is the same. The Spanish Conservatives know it and the Liberals openly proclaim it. The Liberals have turned their backs on this bloody, fruitless page in their country's history, and announce that they are through with Imperialism and all its ways. They rejoice that Spain is at last free from entanglements and special political interests in the Far East and the New World; and look for the rehabilitation of their country through the development of its economic, mental and moral forces. But Spanish Conservatives are unable to forget anything or learn anything; the hand of the dead Past lies heavy upon them.

Equally it might be supposed that they would have, at least, no antipathy for autocratic Russia—Russia, the home of reaction and bureaucracy. But, here again, the contrary is the case. Since 1905 the powers of the old governing classes have steadily declined, and the common people have more and more usurped the prerogatives and the powers of government. And beneath the Russian oligarchy which still rules, although it does not govern, are the countless millions that are socialistic or anarchistic at heart. The Spanish Clericals know full well that tyranny and autocracy are doomed in the Russian Empire, and that the day of the common people, of the proletariat, has dawned there, as elsewhere throughout the civilized world. They have, therefore, backed Prussia in this war, trusting to the

mailed fist to re-establish and maintain their economic and social ideals.

The Russian Orthodox Church is anathema to them, for it has come into conflict with Catholicism in Poland and the Levant, and has made much headway, especially in the latter sphere. The only thing that commends itself to them, with respect to the Russian Church, is its orthodoxy, tyranny and general policy of reaction.

## Where Spain's Sympathy Really Lies.

The Spanish peasantry are pro-German, because they are illiterate and profoundly religious as well as docile. The artisans in the towns and cities are pro-Ally, because they are revolutionary socialists, free-thinkers, and educated at least to a degree. They are class-conscious, and hate the Imperialists whom they blame for all their economic and social ills. The Church, the nobility, the bureaucracy are pro-German, being traditionalists and Imperialists. The army and navy are officered by the upper classes, and are subservient to them. Political and historic Spain, therefore, supports the Teutonic but democratic, free-thinking, progressive Spain is, and must of necessity be, Pro-Ally. The conflict between these two parties paralyzes action on either side.

## BRITAIN'S MEAT IMPORTS.

### Offers Excellent Market for Canadian Producers.

The United Kingdom in the fiscal year 1914-15 imported meats having a total value of \$311,000,000. Only \$81,000,000 of this came from British possessions. Out of this latter amount no less than \$16,000,000 was for frozen beef from Australia. It will be seen from this statement that England is to a large extent dependent for her meat supplies upon countries outside of the British Empire. The Argentine sent no less than \$70,000,000 worth of chilled beef, frozen beef and canned beef. Canada contributed little outside of bacon and hams. Since the war broke out there have been continuous demands for meats of all kinds. Enormous supplies have been sent forward by the Argentine, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Uruguay. Some fairly large orders have also been placed in Canada.

With a view to studying the situation on the spot and acquiring information for the direction of Canadian production, Mr. H. S. Arkell, Assistant Live Stock Commissioner, early in the year went to England and France, and on his return prepared a report which is amongst the most valuable and suggestive articles in *The Agricultural War Book, 1916*. This report is also contained in Pamphlet No. 19 of the Live Stock Branch.

Eggs.—The shutting off of the big Russian supply has made a big opening for Canadian eggs, which will continue as long as the war lasts. After the war Canada can hold her trade if we pay special attention to quality and grading.

Bacon.—Through a lessening of the Danish imports due largely to German purchasing in Denmark, Canada has been enabled greatly to increase her exports. The war demands have been great, and the British workman has been able to buy bacon more freely. Canada can hold this increased trade if we keep up the quality and carefully look to the method of curing. The outlook for the feeding of hogs is promising at the present time.

Beef.—We produce good beef in Canada, but the quantity of prime available for the British market is as yet quite limited. The home market and the United States appropriate all this. After an interesting trial, however, it has been found that France is, and will continue to be, a good market for our frozen beef; possibly also Italy.

This is but a brief reference to some of the chief points in Mr. Arkell's survey. It would seem, that while the war lasts there will be an increasing demand for meats of all kinds, for eggs, poultry and dairy products, particularly cheese. After the war is over there will be some readjustments that cannot now be foreseen, but through the enormous destruction of live stock in Europe, and the tremendous drains that have been made on the surplus products of the rest of the world, there must result an enhanced value in live stock of all kinds. There may be some uncertainty as to market conditions of grain after the war, but not so as to live stock and live stock products.