

SPAIN'S LOST COLONIES.

CRUELTY, GREED AND TYRANNY CAUSE HER DECLINE.

Fertile Historical Facts—The People Oppressed for the Benefit of Titled Drones—Spanish-American Revolutions, Etc.

Toward the end of the sixteenth century Spain was without question the greatest power in the world. She owned all that she now possesses, in addition to Portugal, the kingdoms of Naples and of Sicily, the duchies of Milan, the Netherlands and the whole of the two Americas south of the thirty-fourth parallel, a dominion to which neither Great Britain nor Russia, nor yet the United States can be compared in respect of potential wealth-yielding power. This empire, too, rested on strong foundations. It lasted in Naples for 200 years. The people of the Low Countries threw it off only by an effort that was like a martyrdom, while the Spanish ascendancy in America was so deeply rooted that even now the creed, the language and the civilization of every land that belonged to Spain remains essentially Spanish.

To-day Spain is one of the most weak and fallen kingdoms on the face of the globe. Only part of the Iberian Peninsula remains in her possession. Her population has dwindled to 17,000,000. She is threatened with the loss to the United States of her only two remaining colonies, the Antilles and the Philippines. Her treasury is practically bankrupt, her army disorganized, and in fact she has sunk to the level of a fourth-rate power. She shows that she is one of those nations, which, to use the words of Lord Salisbury, "have exhausted their vitality and are doomed to decay."

What the cause of this decay can be is a subject for much speculation and discussion, neither of which, however, has as yet furnished any satisfactory response to the problem. There are some who ascribe it to the expulsion of the Jews, but Spain reached the culminating point of her power almost two centuries after the Hebrews had been driven out of the kingdom. There are yet others who insist that the valor and the manhood of the Spaniard has decreased, but ample evidence to the contrary has been furnished even since the beginning of the present war, while the first Napoleon was wont to declare that he had never met in all his wars more daring and reckless foes than the Spanish guerrillas.

CUPIDITY OVERREACHED ITSELF.

In fact, there is no explanation that can be furnished for the astounding decline of Spain unless it be that the inevitable advance of progress and enlightenment, even in Spanish countries has gradually awakened the masses to the injustice of their being oppressed and ground down for the benefit of the classes, and to the iniquity of extorting from the people the fruit of their labor for the benefit of favored and generally titled drones. Spain, it must be confessed, has from time immemorial treated her foreign possessions as milk cows, to be drained of their last drop of milk for the sole advantage of those in power at Madrid, and has not even practiced that piece of elementary domestic economy, which consists in leaving something to the producer to serve as a kind of nestegg. She forgot, in fact, the principle inculcated by the Bible when it forbade the muzzling of the ox that thrashes the corn.

Greedy and cruelty are indeed the chief causes of Spain's decay as a great colonial empire. Her dependencies, "ultramare," that is to say, beyond the sea, besides being fleeced by the Madrid Government have been robbed without scruple by the royal officials and administrators, all of whom have been Spaniards appointed by the sovereign. Spanish America, which comprised in the early part of this century, the whole of South America, with the exception of Brazil, the entire region of Central America, including Mexico, and more than a third of what is now the United States was divided into four vice royalities, bearing the names of Mexico, Peru, Buenos Ayres and New Grenada, and into three captain generalships, Chili, Caracas and Guatemala. These viceroys and Captain Generals were accountable only to the monarch of Spain, and exercised the most autocratic and despotic sway, their word being law in all legislative, judicial and military affairs. Their terms of office were from four to six years, and they invariably returned to Spain with colossal fortunes amassed by nefarious means.

DESPOTISM HELD SWAY.

The tyranny with which Spain ruled her American colonies is almost incredible. There was a strict censorship of literature. No books could be imported of which the ecclesiastics disapproved. At the beginning of the revolution in 1810 Peru and Chili possessed between them only one printing press. Intercourse with other countries was as far as possible prevented. The King of Spain reserved to himself the right of granting or refusing passports to such of his subjects as desired to visit the colonies, and no colonist was allowed to visit Europe or even a neighboring colony without the special permission of the Captain General of the province in which he lived.

Shipmasters, other than Spaniards, who attempted to enter the harbor of any Spanish colony, as also merchants who traded without official permission, were punished with death. To increase

his revenue the King sold to the so-called Philippine Company, an association of Spanish merchants trading in America, as well as in the far Orient, the sole right of importing and exporting to and from his colonies every description of merchandise, and of fixing the prices at which it might be sold. Death was the penalty of trading without this company's license. The colonists were compelled to sell their produce at prices fixed by the company, whose net profits were at the rate of 300 per cent.

The company was also allowed to maintain a fleet of armed vessels known as Guarda Costas, to prevent trading and intercourse with any ship or individual unfurnished with the company's license. In fact, the oppression and despotism with which Spain administered her colonial possessions in this hemisphere would be beyond belief were it not for the fact that it survived until a few months ago in the Philippine Islands in all its medieval horror.

SPAIN DRIVEN OFF THIS CONTINENT.

The success of the States of the North American republic encouraged the sorely tried inhabitants of Spanish-America to take advantage of the difficulties in which Spain became involved with France and England in the first decade of this century, and to begin wars of independence on their own account, and inasmuch as the conditions of affairs at Madrid at the time precluded the dispatch of reinforcements to the various viceroys and Captain Generals, the rebellions attained such proportions by the time peace had been restored in the mother country, and troops were sent across the Atlantic to the Western hemisphere, that it was then too late.

But the Spaniards, despite the odds against them, made a stubborn fight, just as they have been doing in Cuba; and although the war of independence began in Venezuela in 1810, it lasted without interruption, until 1824, when Spain surrendered her last possessions on the American continent. It was a war characterized by the savagery and frightful cruelty which the Carlist conflicts, and in more recent times the struggle in the Antilles, have demonstrated to be inseparable from Spanish methods of conducting warfare. The royal troops showed the insurgents no mercy. According to Spanish official records they executed 80,000 persons, many of whom were put to death with every refinement of cruelty, while the histories of the Latin republics of this continent show that there were at least a quarter of a million victims thus executed, exclusive of the untold thousands killed in cold blood by the royal troops, who destroyed every village and town through which they passed if the inhabitants were suspected of sympathizing with the revolution.

Gen. Morillo, who commanded the Spanish forces in Venezuela, Ecuador and New Grenada, seems to have served as an example to Gen. Weyler. For in his official despatch describing the measures which he adopted on entering the City of Santa Fe de Bogota, he writes: "Every person of either sex who was capable of reading or writing was put to death. By this cutting off all who were in any way educated I hope effectually to check the spirit of the revolution."

All who had held official positions in the local administration, all who were connected with the insurgents or distinguished for their talents or attainments, were thrown into prison and there kept until the day appointed for their execution, when they were either hanged or shot, husbands being put to death in the presence of their wives, and children in the presence of their parents.

These terrible acts of cruelty, far from intimidating the rebellious colonies, merely served to exasperate them more bitterly against Spanish domination and to determine them that death in any form was preferable to a continuance of the atrocious tyranny to which they had been subjected. Moreover, they were encouraged by the sympathy which their struggles excited both in the United States, and in England, sympathy which showed itself in the form of supplies, and of volunteers. Large contingents of North Americans and of Britons were to be found fighting side by side with the rebels in almost every notable engagement, and in the great battle of Ayacucho, in December, 1824, which proved the death blow to Spanish rule in Chili and Peru, it was an Englishman, Gen. Miller, who commanded the cavalry of the patriot army, while an American, Col. O'Connor, was chief of staff.

One might have thought that the lesson thus taught at so heavy a cost would have been taken to heart by Spain, and that she would have ordered her administration of her remaining colonial possessions, the Antilles and the Philippines in such a way as to win the good will and the affection of the population. Such, however, was not the case. Spain pursued in Cuba and in the far Orient the same policy that had resulted in the loss of all her immense dependencies on the American mainland.

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The pope made eight hogsheds of wine last year from the vineyard of the Vatican gardens. A small part of the wine is reserved for his own use, another portion is sent to the churches to be used at mass, and the rest is sold.

Mr. Gladstone at the time of his death was a member of the Royal Academy, holding the sinecure office of Professor of Ancient History. Other honorary members of the Academy who are not artists are Mr. Lecky, who is Secretary for Foreign Correspondence; Bishop Creighton of London, Professor of Ancient Literature, and Mr. Francis C. Penrose, antiquary.

Charles Kean the younger's books and mementoes are to be sold soon in London. Among them are the folio Shakespeare presented by the Duke of Devonshire to Edmund Kean, a mulberry tree at Stratford-on-Avon once owned by Garrick, and the scales, weights, knife, and parchment bond used by Edmund and Charles Kean when acting the part of Shylock.

Kaiser Wilhelm draws the line at Jews. A Magdeburg Hebrew, proud of his seventh boy, asked permission to call the child William and to have the Emperor's name entered on the register as godfather. He received in reply from the Government "the decision that the entry of his All Highness's name as godfather in the registry of names of children of the Mosaic faith is not permissible."

Africa seems to work on Prince Henry of Orleans's temper. In his last expedition he quarrelled with M. Bonvalot, his companion, returning to insult the Italian army, which led to his duel with the Count of Turin. The expedition into Abyssinia, which he has just entered upon with the Russian Leontieff, has already split up into two parties, as the Prince and M. Leontieff could not agree from the start.

Many years ago the daughter of an artist who was painting the queen was discovered to be so exactly of the same stature as her majesty that she sat to her father for the queen's figure, thereby relieving her majesty of many tedious hours. This lady, whose name is Miss Blanche Sully, now lives in America, to which country she went back loaded with exquisite presents from her majesty.

Lord Wolseley is almost as devoted to the pen as the sword, and if he had not been fated to be a field marshal he would beyond question have been a man of letters. He rises early in the morning to write, and his official duties only commence when a pile of MS. testifies to his industry with the pen. For some time past he has employed a number of copyists in making extracts for him in the archives of Venice.

Kaiser Wilhelm carries with him a small but serviceable revolver either in his pocket or in his belt when in uniform. The threats of the anarchists have caused him to have recourse to this measure of security. His majesty is extremely skillful in the use of the weapon, and the chasseur who accompanies him everywhere has had orders to inspect it every morning in order to make sure that it is in working order.

Few people know how Bismarck and his ancestors got their name. Bismarck is the name of one of those ancient castles a short distance from Stendal, on the road from Cologne to Berlin, in the center of the old Marquisate of Brandenburg. The castle had this name because it defended the "Marca," or the line where the River Biese formed a boundary in former times, or mark of defense against invaders. Hence the name of Bismarck.

For the Babies

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I hardly think, said the lawyer, that you can get a separation from your wife on account of her making a practice of throwing things at the dog.

But, Great Caesar, mister, said the man with the haggard look and the black eye, every time she throws at the dog she hits me.

FRUITS OF EXPERIENCE.

Here's a good article on the Art of Making a Mustard Plaster.

Pooh! There's no art in making a mustard plaster; the art is in getting it put on your husband after you have made it.



RELATION SHOULD BE SUPPRESSED.

Young Doctor—I'm doing very well. I was called up three nights last week. Old Doctor—That's good! I hope you never forget to appear annoyed on such occasions?

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