

Spain

Ricardo Mella

1897

Time passes and, far from improving, the situation in Spain grows worse and worse. The colonial wars go badly and the hope of a swift pacification is abandoned. The exceptional state of Barcelona has not changed; the hundreds of wretches arbitrarily detained in the prisons and at Montjuich only await a bit of belated justice to set them free or else to consummate that legal crime that, taking the lives of some, will cast the others forever into the penal institutions that the mother country reserves for the best of her children.

Today, as yesterday, some ignorant proletarians march like docile sheep to the slaughter where Weiler, Polavieja and their ilk work wonderfully as executioners well paid by the reaction and the clergy.

Today, as yesterday, the inquisitorial tortures, protected by the silence of the stupefied masses, continue their triumphant career; nothing has changed.

However, thanks to the persistence of such a state of things, some disastrous effects arise. Catalonia, industrial region par excellence, see the most important of its factories close and thousands of workers are thus plunged into the most terrible poverty. Galicia, Asturias and the ancient kingdom of Léon have rapidly become depopulated, their inhabitants invading the liners bound for American and in a short time the effect of the closing of the factories and of the emigration will be felt by all of Spain, which will be devastated by the scourge of famine.

From Cuba and Philippines also come the echoes of the poverty that invades everywhere. In the colonies and the metropolis alike, life seems to flee and alone are heard the cries of suffering of those dying of hunger and the lamentations of those who cry for dear one sacrificed to a cause that matters very little to them.

We must add to all that that the mass killings and nameless cruelties inspired by the clerical reaction and executed by the military have produced a tension of mind so that one would have to be very blind not to see the cataclysm approaching, coming to put a violent end to the infamies and the massacres of the restored monarchy.

The Carlist agitation is a proof of what we claim:—as always, while the dawn of the Revolution appeared on the horizon, the gangs of Carlos VII prepare to take the field. Some armed groups have already appeared in Spain, but the reader must not believe that these individuals have been foully murdered like the republicans of Novelda. The reactionaries are wolves of the same litter; Carlists and conservatives do not consume one another.

The past civil war was fomented as much by the Carlists as by the monarchists who are our masters today, and when it did not suit either to continue it, peace was made. Today, faced with the danger, the conservatives and liberals of the restored monarchy, guided in this by a very natural instinct of self-preservation, will aid, as in the past, the partisans of absolutism.

Clericalism has taken possession of the institutions; the armies are commanded by generals belonging to the *moinocratie* [government of the monks] and the war minister is a Jesuit.

Over all that the wave advances. The insurrections de Cuba et des Philippines crowning the edifice, the Carlists on the march; the Biscayan and Catalan separatists on the alert; the republicans dethroning their leaders, impatient to hurl themselves into the revolutionary struggle that these leader block; the workers chased from the factories, promenading their misery in the streets; the Andalusian peasants pillaging the bakeries and the warehouses of wheat; the militant workers of socialism rotting in the prisons and, in an imminent future, murder consummated and hundreds of workers sent to the penal colony or deported.

Forward! There are still many men disposed to fight. If the reaction prepares, it is because it senses that the Revolution comes to give battle.

Anarchic socialism and the revolutionary spirit still survive in Spain; they will do their work and the solidarity of the other nations will not fail us.

Persecuted, imprisoned, deported, we will continue to work for the approaching Revolution.

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