

## SPAIN'S CATHOLIC AWAKENING

Whatever happens politically matters little in face of the beginnings of this wonderful Catholic revival. No Government can kill this, and it is bound to bear a glorious fruit that we may be privileged to see. 'Spain has ceased to be Catholic' were the famous words of the present Prime Minister. Events are already showing the magnitude of that lie.

ALEXANDER PARKER.

## STALIN: A MAN WITH A MACHINE

If (hypothesized Aristotle) if but the tool could do its own work, even as the automatons of Daedalus and the walking tripods of Hephaestus, then there would be no need of slaves and 'prentices. And if (thought Antiparos of the water mill) we go on inventing things like this we shall certainly liberate our poor slaving women and return to the Golden Age. And Marx (who mistook the plutarchy born of the Reformation for Christianity) caustically observed that the ingenious Antiparos knew no political economy; and Aristotle not being a Christian could not conceive the intricacies of value-breeding process and other mysteries of industrial capitalism. Actually, the work of the machine, which according to Proudhon should be a protest of the 'genius of industry against humiliating and murderous toil,' is better described by the words which Ure applies to a modern factory, 'A vast automaton composed of various mechanical and intellectual organs acting in uninterrupted concert for the production of a common object, all of them being subordinated to a self-regulated moving force.' Ure's 'benignant power of steam' (quoted sardonically by Kautsky) does not extend its benign influence beyond its true lord and master, the capitalist (whose beaming benevolence pervades the whole working world).

## BLACKFRIARS

We have no space to talk of the moral effect of the machine which has long become the true Educator of the People. The plutarchy for once over-reached itself in the mock-alliance with democracy; the *geste*, palliative and patronising, of Free Library and Model Factory was made in an evil hour for Capital—for it salvaged, here and there, from the submerged proletariat a dangerous half-thinking mind that asked for more. The educative influence of the factory on the individual is annihilating. On the Commonality, present and to come? Here is the crucial question.

We threw away the tool because machinery promised us an age of plenty. True to promise the age, dreamed of by antiquity has come—and because of the plentifulness we starve. Machinery (a monstrous growth, some will have it, fertilised by the myriad corpses of the proletariat) by a sinister alliance with Mammon begets yet another monster, an economic god, whose cult demands the burning of our harvest, the sacrificial rotting of our goods. Who has an answer to the problem? An orgy of dynamitism can alone force the world back to handicraft. For all that, there is a sanity in the tool-apologist that the others lack. There is dynamic in his urgency. Despite the partitive or complementary nature of his work the craftsman remains materially the basis of manufacture. The detail worker, Kautsky points out, maintains a certain independence of the capitalist. And, by way of corollary, the workers are urged to maintain handicraft practice and apprenticeship, for with the mechanisation of the craftsman follows the possibility of dismissal, and the success of many of the Trades Unions consists in the retention of the handicraft.

Nevertheless we cannot ignore the machine. Can we use it without extinguishing the race? The great affirmative is Stalin's; but we feel little assurance that his conception of the human race postulates much more than the social value of the hive-bee.

The 'secret' of Stalin (the latest 'mystery' of the Western press) lies in none of Essad Bey's sensational catch-phrases about the menace of Asia, that lurks behind the Georgian, waiting to fly at the throat of Europe. Stalin has indeed presumably the Oriental mind, and this is the mind

that can dream most consistently of the industrialisation of Russia. He believes in the machine and believes that eventually the world will be the better for it. Meanwhile, he is of the East. The Eastern need not appeal to the humanitarian principles of democracy, because he does not accept them. If suffering and the sacrifice of the individual are the price to be paid for successful five-year, seven-year, ten-year plans, *so be it* would be his mood.

Russophobia gains ground amongst the credulous, but Stalin is too interested in his machines and the industrialisation of Russia, to worry about the extension of the International. Failing chaos on the one hand, and universal conversion to Christ on the other, the world will probably drift towards an economic organisation similar to Russia's. Capitalism it was, that in opposition to peasant economy developed the necessity of co-operation. Communism, we are assured by its preachers, is the logical outcome of Capitalism. We can work for the unadopted alley of Distributism, for the strengthening of the regulator of civilisation, the handicraftsman, and for any reformatory policy (however radical) that has as its basis an appreciation of the individual value of men and of the sanctity of the family. With the mechanisation of mankind, whether by Communist or Capitalist, we can have nothing to do.

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