

SPAIN BEGS YOUR PARDON !...

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE  
SPANISH MARTYRS WHO, IN A TITANIC  
STRUGGLE AGAINST INTERNATIONAL  
FASCISM AND INTERNATIONAL COWARDICE,  
SURPASSED THE GLORY AND HEROISM OF  
NUMANTIA AND SAGUNTUM IN THEIR DEVO-  
TION TO THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY AND  
THE PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM.

THE AUTHOR,

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SPAIN BEGS YOUR PARDON !Preface

The record left by the Hispanic peoples of their maritime and colonial activities beginning in the first quarter of the XVth century, as it is generally given out in text-books intended for the enlightenment of the Anglo-Saxon-American child and a large number of indiscriminating adults, constitutes a sad and ugly blot on the otherwise unsullied pages of modern European history!

In fact, what did Hispania accomplish that deserves the admiration and gratitude of mankind? What contribution of enduring value did she make towards the progress of the human race, or for the upbuilding of the great civilization of which we are so justly proud? What heroic deeds or acts of unsurpassed valor did her sons ever perform that may give her a place of honor in the immortal Halls of Fame?

Of course Hispania has particular assets that must not be overlooked. Without them the globe-trotter, the curiosity seeker, and the thrill hunter could not but waste their lives in dismal ennui. She has her gory and barbaric bull-fights, the pathetic pride of her impoverished hidalgos, her exotic and picturesque gypsies, her famous and enticing bayaderes,

her peculiar trait of building castles in Spain, and, above all, the lure of her black-eyed señoritas hiding behind intriguing mantillas, disporting ornate tortoise-shell combs, or carrying on ardent and romantic flirtations behind the symbolic language of their fans. Without such barbaric and quaint customs there would be nothing left for the thrill hunter, no inspiration for the dilettante artist or litterateur, no fitting arena for the lover of Nature to commune, to his heart's content, with the truly primitive and untame.

However, aside from such charming peculiarities, easily replaceable by the exoticisms of the South Sea Islands, Iberia has no other claims to our condescending notice than the hideous record of centuries of ignorance, of superstition, of backwardness and bigotry, of unspeakable greed and cruelty, of aversion and hostility to all forms of enlightenment and progress. Her record in the conquest, colonization and civilization of America, almost her only titles to fame, is a black stain on the glorious pages of maritime enterprise, a shame of shames to humanity at large.

Her unparalleled rapacity and ferocious bloodthirstiness towards the Indians; her unbridled destructiveness towards the priceless monuments and relics of great and noble Amerindian civilizations; her lack of any humane and constructive policy in the reduction of the American savages to a better way of life—all contrast very unfavorably with our own record of enlightened policy towards the natives, and are most offensive to our more developed sense of justice, humanity, and fair play.

Such is the general impression one gets about Spain and Portugal on reading the reams of literature on this subject written by prophetically inspired patriots of other lands, especially by those of Anglo-Saxon-American extraction.

However, as there are always two sides to each question, and this one has been sufficiently treated from its darkest angle, perhaps to enhance one's own achievements or gloss over one's own failures, it may not be out of place to reverse the situation and focuss our eyes on its bright side, if there is one, just for the sake of that much vaunted spirit of fair play of which we boast so much.

It is the purpose of the following pages to give a brief account of the ethnic composition of the Hispanic peoples, of their achievements, if any, and show, by contrast, how they stand in relation to those of their righteous critics.

## I. RACIAL BACKGROUND OF THE HISPANIC PEOPLES

1:

Though politically divided into two separate nations--- Portugal and Spain---the Iberian peninsula forms a perfectly homogeneous geographical unit, bounded by the Pyrenean mountains, and the Cantabrian, Atlantic and Mediterranean seas. Her ethnic elements, although as varied and complex as those of any other European group, are practically the same for the whole of the Iberian peninsula.

Some of these elements are of relatively recent introduction through the invasions of Berbers, Arabs, Visigoths, Romans, and Hebrews; others date from semi-prehistoric times, and originated in the numerous colonies established all along the Mediterranean and Atlantic sea coasts of the Peninsula by Carthaginians, Phoenicians and Greeks.

The true basis, however, of the Hispanic peoples are the Celtiberians who, in their turn, are the result of the amalgamation and assimilation of the Celts with the much older stock of the Iberians.

These oldest known inhabitants of the Iberian peninsula were first noticed and described by Silax, a Greek traveler of *the* VIth century B. C., who studied them in the regions of north-eastern Spain. Here they formed many separate and variously civilized tribes connected by at least apparent identity of race and by similarity of language.

The word Iberian is derived from Iber (Ebro), a river in northern Spain, where its people was first observed by Silax. However, as a race, the Iberians were not confined to the banks of the Ebro River, nor yet to the Iberian Peninsula, but held sway over a very wide area around the Mediterranean Sea. They extended throughout the regions of northwestern Europe, as far as Great Britain and the Netherlands. They still form the basis of much of the population of the Mediterranean basin, especially of North Africa, the Iberian Peninsula, and parts of France, Italy, England and Germany.

Our knowledge of the ancient language and institutions of the Iberians is rather meager and is derived, for the most part, from coin inscriptions distributed throughout the Peninsula. Their alphabet had some similarity with that of the western Greeks, and, in some respects, with that of the Phoenicians, but some of its characters, in the opinion of competent authorities, belong to an earlier form of script.

On the widespread similarity of physical characteristics and language and on the at least apparent identity of race, is based the Iberian or Mediterranean theory, of which more anon. The Basques of today, and a type common all over the Iberian peninsula, as well as the small, swarthy Welshman, the small, dark Highlander, the Black Celts who dwell west of Shannon, the typical inhabitants of Aquitania and Brittany, not to mention

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(1) Enc. Brit., 11th Edit., Anthropology.



the Berbers, Ligurians and others, all resemble the type just described, and are supposed to descend from the original Iberian stock. Of course when Silax became acquainted with them in Spain the Iberians were already an old people in the land and in a relatively well developed state of civilization.

Not long after the visit and observations of Silax a new ethnic element appeared in the midst of the Iberian world. It was the Celts whom Piteas, another Greek traveler of the IVth century B. C., encountered as adventitious settlers among the aborigenes of the Iberian peninsula.

According to the latest authorities on this subject the original home of the Celts, as they are known to history, appears to have been Central Europe, where they are known to have dwelt since the Stone Age, and from where their greatest movement of expansion took place about five hundred years B. C. It is probable that their first and earliest advance was towards the Mediterranean Sea, and especially towards France. Their migrations extended as far as Great Britain, Scandinavia, Italy, and eastward to Asia Minor and other regions. They must have first entered Spain not later than twenty five hundred years ago, and perhaps continued to penetrate therein for the next three or four centuries.

The fusion and amalgamation of the two stocks—Iberian and Celt—produced the Celtiberians, whose characteristics are remarkably homogenous and inextricably interwoven with each other, especially in the Northeast part of the Spanish central plateau. In some parts—northeast, for example—the Celt element predominates, while in the southeast and south the Iberian was less affected by the Celtic blood, but received, on the other hand, a greater dose of the Arabic, Greek and Punic.

The Celtiberians were a very warlike people, rather cruel to their enemies, but very kind and hospitable to strangers. The greatest hardships had no terrors for them, a fact that has been abundantly attested in the whole course of the Hispanic history. The annals of the Portuguese maritime discovery and exploration, and the heroic exploits of the Spaniards in the conquest of America, and especially in the exploration of the North American Southwest, are monuments of endurance and fortitude seldom reached, and never surpassed, by any other peoples within the compass of written history.

When Numantia was besieged by Scipio the younger, in 138 B. C., rather than to surrender to the enemy, the Numantians killed each other to the last man, woman and child, while a huge conflagration, set up by their own hands, buried their charred bodies under the ruins of their beloved city. Their fate may not be for us an object of envy, but certainly it cannot fail to elicit our greatest admiration.

Strabo attributed to the Celtiberians an extreme love of independence; a valor that was akin to an utter contempt of life itself; a remarkable spirit of individualism, indocil, venturesome, and bellicose, and an extreme sobriety in regard to food and other necessities of life. These traits have been amply illustrated in the course of the Portuguese and Spanish history.

## 2.

The origin of the Iberians—the oldest racial stock of the Hispanic peninsula and of all Europe—is as difficult to establish as that of the American Indians or of any other stock of mankind.

It is a problem that cannot be solved except by the correct answer to the riddle of the original home of the human race.

Owing, perhaps, to the Biblical tradition respecting the origin of man, it has seemed necessary to place the cradle of the human species somewhere in Asia, and consequently the first inhabitants of the Spanish Peninsula are assumed by many to have come from that hotbed of mankind. This belief, accepted as a dogma by the peoples of the West till the advent of the sciences of Geology and Paleontology, may have in fact originated in the vivid recollection of numerous and sweeping Asiatic invasions of Europe since times antedating all written history.

Other places, however, have been designated as the possible original home of mankind, as for instance: Africa, the lost continent of Gondwanaland, and even America. Some of the most recent authorities on such matters are again pointing to Asia as the probable cradle of the race, although the precise spot is no longer the same.

Griffith Taylor offers a theory that is worthy of our consideration. He thinks of the world as consisting of a central continent (Asia) with three peninsulas—Eurafria, Australasia and America. He finds that "each peninsula contains zones of peoples, which are more and more primitive as we move away from Asia." From these facts he deduces the following principles of race evolution: "1. The most primitive races are found 'pushed to the periphery', i.e. in Tasmania, Cape Colony, Greenland and Brazil. 2. The last evolved races are found in the center, where stimuli leading to evolution have been greatest throughout the ages. 3. Where the racial evolution has progressed farthest

the 'buried strata' of more primitive tribes will be most numerous. 4. The order of evolution is the same, whether we move outwards from the center of evolution across the zones, or downwards at the center of evolution through the 'Strata.'" He concludes that "the primitive races are found alive precisely where they did not originate."

From these principles, based on the anthropological and paleontological evidence available, he concludes that the cradle of mankind must have been somewhere in central Asia, and that the order in which the different races appeared, and were pushed towards the periphery, is also the order of their evolution. According to his theory the ascending order of the different human races that have appeared on earth is as follows: Neandertal, Negrito, Australian, Negro, Iberian, Nordic, Early Alpine, and Late Alpine. Of course this order is one of time rather than of space. Some of these races have disappeared almost completely, others are more or less displaced, but all are very mixed.

"As regards the main Iberian stratum," he says, "it is universal except in those peripheral portions of the world where the more primitive negroid peoples still hold their own...They seem to have been the great megalith-builders, and they carried the late Paleolithic and early Neolithic civilizations all over the world.

"The Nordic stratum...is perhaps a specialized upper zone of the Iberian. It occurs typically in North-West Europe, but Proto-Nordic types are found sporadically from Turkestan to North-eastern Japan. In Bohemia, Russia, Poland, and Germany, the Nordics preceded the Alpine inhabitants of today. Using the term 'Nordic' in the widest fashion...we may assign many of the highest melanesians and the earliest Polynesians to this stratum."

He finds the Alpine or Mongolian in the latest strata and contends that "as the geological record incorporates the history of the evolution of life, so the ethnological record must contain the history of racial evolution." And adds: "I can see no escape from the conclusion that the Alpine-Mongolian is the latest type of man which has been developed from a type not unlike the late Iberian (or Nordic) race of man." (2)

This is a very ingenious theory, and not to be dismissed lightly. However, the number of its adherents is not yet large, perhaps because it is too recent.

### 3.

One more widely accepted and viewed with greater favor by a greater number of anthropologists is the Iberian or Mediterranean theory, which places the cradle of the race in the Mediterranean region, and contends that the Iberian is the progenitor of all other races of men.

In his book, Races and Peoples, Brinton says: "Beginning our search for the birth-place of the species, we may consider that it will be indicated by the cumulative evidence of three conditions. We may look for it, (1.) where the oldest relics of man or his industries have been found; (2.) where the remains of the highest of the lower animals, especially the man-like apes, have been exhumed, as it is assumed that man himself descended from some

(2) Taylor, Th. G. Environment and Race, p. 220 and ff. London, Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1927.

(3) Brinton, D. G. Races and Peoples, p. 83. Philadelphia, D. McKay, 1901

such form; and (3.) where we know, from paleontologic evidence, a climate prevailed suited to man's unprotected early condition."

This seems to be a fair test for an hypothesis regarding man's place of origin. Now, according to the geologic and paleontologic record, nowhere on the face of the earth were these conditions so well fulfilled in their entirety, nor did they ever appear simultaneously, or in their proper order, in any other sufficiently large region, as in Eurafria, that is, in the regions consisting of what is at present north Africa, southwestern Europe and the rich valley which only later on became the Mediterranean sea.

Here it may be noted, as a matter of elucidation, that, sometime between the Tertiary and Quaternary periods, what is now the Sahara desert was then a branch of the Atlantic Ocean; that north Africa joined southern Europe; and, finally, that what is today the Mediterranean sea was an immense tract of fertile land, dotted with some comparatively small lakes and enjoying one of the best climates to be found anywhere on earth.

It is this great prehistoric Mediterranean region which is called Eurafria by the paleontologists; and it is this region which, more than any region of the globe, has yielded the most abundant, the most complete and the most continuous record of man, a record thoroughly representative of all phases of his evolutionary life.

The oldest and, at the same time, the most authentic remains of man have been ascribed to the Quaternary period and exhumed almost exclusively in the Iberian peninsula, France, southern England, north Africa and a few other localities, all within the boundaries of Eurafria. A few such remains have also been found in apparently older strata, that is, in the upper Tertiary. How-

ever, their genuineness has aroused heated controversies among the paleontologists. In other words, while some believe them to be relics of the Quaternary period, others insist that they belong to the Tertiary. Whatever the merits of the question may be, as they were found in the same region of Eurafria, especially in certain localities of Portugal and southern France, they rather confirm than disprove the hypothesis of the Eurafrian or Mediterranean origin of man.

Another proof of this hypothesis, in the opinion of some authors, is offered by the megalithic monuments, an early product of the Iberians of both northern Africa and southern Europe. Taylor himself (4) shared this opinion. It is true that their monuments are not exclusive of the Eurafrian region but appear in a much wider territory. However, outside of the Mediterranean area they are neither so numerous nor so peculiar in their pristine characteristics, and seem only to prove the extent and thoroughness of the early migrations of these primitive but energetic peoples, who at some remote time seem to have dominated the whole earth.

Now, both these monuments and the remains of man's arts associated with them date, in the opinion of most geologists, from the early or middle Quaternary, that is, from approximately the time when man is supposed to have started as such. They all carry in themselves the evidence of a common origin, the central point of which coincides with that of the Eurafrian region.

In the opinion of Von Humboldt, one of the keenest and most constructive minds in all fields of science, the builders of the

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(4) Taylor, *ibid.*, loc. cit.

megalithic monuments were the direct descendants of the Cro-Magnon men, the great artists who, in the caves of Altamira, Spain, and in southern France, left us a great variety of paintings which, for their realism and force of expression, have never been surpassed by later artists of any land. It is these builders of the megalithic monuments who, in the opinion of Von Humboldt, are our true ancestors, while all other forms of prehistoric men, who had developed and lived for many milleniums before them, and were by then practically extinct, were only collateral branches of that primitive tree which produced man and ape alike.

This view respecting the origin of the present human species is shared by many competent students of this fascinating subject. According to them not only the Iberians of the Hispanic peninsula, but also the Berbers and Lybians of north Africa, the Celts, Gauls and Pits of France and Great Britain, the Ligurs, Egyptians and Sumerians of antiquity, are, or were, all members of the same family, the homo-homogenius of the pre-glacial age, the builders of the megalithic monuments, our direct ancestors and the direct descendants of the last species of mankind to appear on earth—the Cro-Magnon.

(5)  
G. Sergi, one of the ablest authorities on the Eurafriean paleontology, accepts the conclusions of Von Humboldt and classifies all these pre-glacial peoples under the name of Mediterranean race, as all the evidence gathered by this distinguished savant tends to prove that they originated and developed in the Mediterranean area, or Eurafriea, from where

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(5) Sergi, G. The Mediterranean Race, chapt. II ff.  
New York, G. Scribner's Sons, 1901.



they scattered throughout, and peopled, the whole earth, differentiating, as they went along, into all races that have lived and still live on the face of the globe.

This is certain: no other section of the world has given us as many, as old, as continuous and complete records of the prehistoric man, from the early Quaternary or late Tertiary periods up to the present time, as the exceptionally favorable Mediterranean region, so aptly called Eurafria. The Iberians do not appear anywhere as intruders superseding an older race, but as a continuation of the Cro-Magnon men, the last human species to appear on earth, and evolving from them according to the accepted principles of the evolution of the species. From these points of view this conclusion seems inescapable: that the Mediterranean basin is the most probable cradle of mankind, and that the Iberians of Bilax are the direct descendants of the Cro-Magnon men.

The second point in our argument assumes that men must have appeared for the first time, in all probability, in that place of the earth where the remains of the highest of the lower animals, especially the man-like apes, have been found. Eurafria has, in this case also, almost a monopoly on these treasures of antiquity. No other region anywhere on earth has yielded such complete, varied and abundant remains of the higher forms of animal life, and especially of the great apes, as the regions north and south of the Mediterranean Sea. It was here that the man-like apes reigned supreme at the time of, and prior to, the oldest manifestations of men's arts and industries. This fact, together with those enumerated previously, makes the Eurafrian origin of man very highly probable, and is of the greatest significance in connection with the theory of the descent of man from a common ancestor of both man and ape.

The third point of our argument considers the climatic conditions of the world during the time that intervened between the Tertiary and the Quaternary periods, the time in which man is assumed to have become such.

According to the results of many different lines of investigation it seems quite well established that, at the time from which the oldest remains of man date, no other sufficiently large region of the old world possessed conditions of climate for the easy development and growth of the human race as ideal as those prevailing in the Mediterranean region. It is true that man is one of the most adaptable of all higher animals, and has, in the course of ages, learned how to live in relative comfort under the most varied conditions of climate and environment. However, in his primeval infancy he must have been just as helpless as the apes, requiring for his development conditions similar to those under which the apes live today in west central Africa, or were living in the Mediterranean regions at the time man came into his own.

In conclusion, if Eurafria was the only sufficiently large region of the globe that offered favorable climatic conditions to the early development of men at the time between the Tertiary and the Quaternary periods; if it is in this region that the higher animals, especially the man-like apes, had their highest degree of development and found their fittest and most natural abode; and finally, if it is in this region that the oldest relics of man and of his industries are found in their greatest number and variety, it is difficult to evade the conclusion that Eurafria is, in all probability, the birthplace of the human species.

It is true that positive evidence of man's primeval home may never be found for any particular spot of the earth. It is even

possible that man may have risen from lower forms of life in different intervals, but, until further and weightier evidence is adduced in favor of some other place of man's birth, there seems to be no alternative but to accept the theory of man's Eurafrian origin, and consider the Iberians the progenitors of the whole human race.

## 4.

According to this hypothesis the dispersion of mankind proceeded from the Mediterranean region to south, east and north. In general this movement was one of slow and continuous expansion throughout the whole course of man's unwritten history rather than invasions en masse of whole tribes or nations as were those which took place in later ages. However, as the center of dispersion was likely to be continuously over-populated for a long time, it is reasonable to assume that great numbers would occasionally migrate in a body in the direction that was most likely to meet the emergency of the moment.

What were the results, for the humanity at large, of man's dispersion in relation to the different regions of the earth in which he settled? We can only conjecture from a limited number of facts known and from analogy.

The hords that moved southward, to people the vast continent of Africa, were soon cut off from the main body of their brothers by the fast growing desert of Sahara over what had been a shallow branch of the Atlantic ocean. Thus, prevented from coming in contact with peoples endowed with new characteristics and new experiences acquired in the conquest of Nature and in the survival of the fittest; subjected for the most part to the inervating conditions of a torrid climate; deprived by the lavishness of Nature surrounding them of the incentive to work and think; lacking even

the means of communing with one another: under circumstances so unfavorable to any effective progress and enlightenment, these advanced guards of the Mediterranean race that headed towards the south, and which are still represented by many pigmy tribes of central Africa and the Bushmen of Calahari desert, were unable to lift themselves much higher in the zoological scale than the great apes which preceded them in their migrations towards the Congo forests.

It is well known that these primitives succeeded in occupying the whole of central and south Africa and in holding sway over it as long as there were no competitors in the field; but as soon as new tribes, transformed by milleniums of relentless struggle with Nature, and by protracted wanderings over many lands and varied climates, entered Africa by the way of Egypt, they were easily overcome, subdued, assimilated, or ruthlessly exterminated, until only a few remnants were left to witness the debasing effect of an environment where life is too easy and devoid of the stimulant of fierce competition.

On the other hand the herds that migrated eastward, along the northern shores of the newly formed Mediterranean Sea, encountered all kinds of adverse conditions of the environment which they had to overcome, thus, at each step, learning new lessons in contact with, and in the conquest of, the forces of Nature. Wherever they settled a fierce and relentless struggle began, directed towards the adaptation of man to his new habitat. The inner tendencies of the human protoplasm were set in motion by the action and interaction of the environment, with the result that new characteristics and new aptitudes were called into play and perpetuated by natural selection, while those individuals or families which were

unable to compete advantageously in the struggle for the mastery of Nature were either eliminated or assimilated altogether by the stronger. This process, carried to its logical conclusions through eons of time, explains sufficiently the differences that in time arose among the different sections of mankind, originating those varied types of peoples which we designate by the name of races, but which in fact are only mere varieties.

The adaptation, through natural selection, of a section of mankind to a particular environment does not necessarily and always spell progress either physical or mental. The pigmies of central and south Africa are a living proof of this fact. On the other hand such adaptation may promote more physical than mental progress, or vice versa, although what constitutes physical progress is purely a matter of individual opinion. One of the most important external elements of human progress as a whole is, without doubt, the constant intercommunication of peoples, by which new tools, new inventions, new ideas and new thoughts are exchanged among them, turning into the property of all the particular contributions and experiences of each individual, of each tribe, of each ethnic group.

This point is clearly and convincingly illustrated by the truly marvellous creation of all our western civilization made by the peoples bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

No other region on the globe offers such a favorable highway to intercommunication among so many different peoples, so diversified in their family characteristics, in their needs and desires, in the multitude of their experiences and ideas, and in the means to harness Nature in their own service, or mould her to their own esthetic sense.

So it came to pass that religion and philosophy, science and art in all its varied ramifications, commerce and trade, and the greatest tool of mental progress--the alphabet--were all originated and developed among the Mediterranean peoples, as far as the Western world is concerned. All that came afterwards in the way of progress were only minor details, logical deductions, mere embellishments of the monumental structure that attained its highest and best known expression in the civilisations of Sumeria, Crete, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and was made possible only by new and improved means of communication by land and sea, tools that were first fashioned and made use of by the peoples of the Mediterranean area.

In their unceasing centrifugal movement the primitive peoples of Eurafria spread far and wide throughout all inhabitable parts of the earth until all of it was filled and occupied. But man never stopped wandering and, whenever any center of population became too crowded, he started moving again towards less crowded regions or to regions where the inhabitants had become weakened by stagnation or invigorated by a life of ease and luxury.

It is believed that the western slopes of the Himalayas soon became, in the early history of mankind, a hotbed of great multitudes of peoples, and that, unable to move en masse towards the east, whether because of that forbidding barrier, the no less formidable deserts of northeastern Asia, or the opposition of organised peoples already existing farther east, they began to move westward very early in prehistoric times, or by their pressure compelled neighboring peoples to move before them.

One of the earliest ethnic groups to move westward from some unknown region of western Asia is supposed to have been the Celts, very little differentiated in racial characteristics from their parent stock--the Iberians--but hardier physically through a more varied struggle with the forces of Nature, and possessing a greater supply of experiences and tools acquired through their longer wanderings and varied contacts with other peoples and environmental conditions.

Their migrations westward were not likely to have been a sudden eruption as overwhelming as those of Genghis-Khan or of Tamerlane in historic times, but took probably the form of a slow infiltration, with a few bloody clashes here and there with the peoples already established in the lands towards which they were moving. It may have taken centuries, perhaps thousands of years, for them to reach and establish themselves in central Europe where we first find them, and from where they moved again in the middle of the first millennium B. C. towards France and Great Britain. Meanwhile they would amalgamate with the peoples with whom they came in contact to such an extent that only the latest comers--those that settled on the Atlantic shores--were able to keep some of their own peculiar characteristics.

Their entrance in the Iberian peninsula between the IVth and Vth centuries B. C., or thereabouts, must have been even slower, owing to the Pyrenean chain of mountains barring their progress from the east. Their assimilation with the native Iberians was most complete, except in the Basque provinces, where they were scarcely able to penetrate.

Whatever theory we may prefer, or may eventually prove to be the right one in regard to the original cradle of mankind, the final results in relation to the first inhabitants of the Iberian peninsula would be practically the same, though the migrations of peoples might have followed entirely different routes, for prior to the Iberians no other predominating human race seems to have appeared on the scene after the Cro-Magnon, the last of the prehistoric human races, from whom all mankind is supposed to have descended, developed, and diversified.

### 3.

The movements of peoples that took place very early in the history of mankind in all directions of the compass went on unceasingly throughout the ages, and gave rise, through causes already mentioned, to all types of men which at present are to be found on the face of the earth. Such movements were especially conspicuous in the Mediterranean basin since the dawn of history, though, as time went on, they assumed more and more the form of intercommunication for the sake of trade and interchange of goods, of products of human industry, of information and ideas. To these activities of the Mediterranean peoples we owe the materials of which our western civilization is made, whether we think of the present day's southern, central, and northern Europe, or of America, Australia, or any other lands under the influence of the white race.

The Iberian peninsula has always been a center of attraction for other peoples bordering the Mediterranean Sea. The Phoenicians visited her coasts at least as early as 3000 years B. C. They



were especially interested in commerce and trade. In exchange for tin, of which there were great stores in the mines of Rio Tinto, they brought a great variety of products of their own and other Asiatic peoples' industries. They introduced, on the other hand, certain modifications in the alphabet, in the art of computation, and the use of coins. Though they did not specialize in colonization they founded Seville, Malaga, Cordoba, Cadiz and other important emporiums of the Mediterranean commerce and trade.

The Greeks, who came into contact with the Celtiberians about the same time, went as far as Galicia on the northwest coast of Iberia, founding trading posts which, later on, became cities, such as Ovar, Aveiro, and others in the west coast of Portugal. They intermarried freely with the Celtiberians and it is not difficult even today to find in such localities many Greek types of classic times.

However, neither Greeks nor Phoenicians contributed much to the composition of the Hispanic race for, in general, they did not build permanent colonies in those parts, but were content to trade with the natives and return home with cargoes of rich merchandise. Nevertheless the Greek influence on the peninsular tribes was great on the intellectual side. The Greeks built temples, schools and gymnasiums, introduced literature and fine arts, and, together with the Phoenicians, were responsible for the introduction of many religious practices from Egypt and other parts of Asia.

About the middle of the third century B. C. Carthage founded a vast empire in the Peninsula under the strong leadership of Amilcar Barca, Asdrubal and Hanibal. Called by the Phoenicians to aid them against the rebellion of the Celtiberian tribes, the

Carthaginians soon became the masters of the Peninsula, and by 226 B. C. had reached as far as the Ebro river. Here they collided with the Romans, and these two rival powers were soon to decide which was to have the mastery of the Mediterranean.

In the Peninsula the great struggle for supremacy on the part of the mistress of the Mediterranean started with the arrival of Scipio in 210 or 209 B. C. The fortunes of the wars between the two deadly enemies, and between them and the Celtiberians, were varied and indecisive for several years. But as the only strong competitor of the Roman colossus, Carthage was foredoomed. The final result of the wars (the Punic Wars) between these two great Mediterranean powers, is a matter of historical record.

During the three-cornered contest for supremacy in the Peninsula the Hispanic peoples demonstrated on many occasions the heroic stand they could take whenever their liberty or the sacredness of their international engagements were at stake.

Saguntum, for instance, an ally of Rome, had been attacked by the Carthaginians and compelled to surrender. Rather than to break faith with their ally they did exactly what the Numantians had done under like circumstances. This heroic disregard for dear life, shown by both Numantia and Saguntum when their liberty and pledged faith were at stake, had a striking parallel in the heroic defense of Zaragoza against the French carried on by the plain people, without officers and without adequate weapons, against the veteran and conquering hosts of an invincible Napoleon. In the civil war of 1936-38 it was still the people, the workers, the famished and downtrodden, that is, the heirs and representatives of the race, who reenacted the heroic stand of the children of Numantia and Saguntum.

The discontent of most Celtiberian tribes with the rule of Carthage and the flattering promises of the legates of Rome made it easy for the Romans to conquer (209 B. C.) most of the Peninsula. The Roman promises, however, soon proved to be no better than those of any modern imperialistic state. In consequence the Celtiberian tribes rose in rebellion. Viriathus, a shepherd of the mountains of Lusitania, became their great national hero. He organised an army out of the sons of the soil—shepherds and peasants—and fell like an avalanche on the highly trained and disciplined Roman legions. After he defeated the first two legions Rome sent another commanded by one of her ablest generals, but to no avail. Five Roman legions were utterly defeated and "no Roman general could gain any positive advantage over this indefatigable enemy." (6)

Rome had to give up the hope of conquering this more than a match for her in the open field of battle, and adopted the easier method of diplomacy, in most instances the equivalent of duplicity. Through her envoys she made a treaty of alliance with the Lusitanians, who, not yet initiated in the arts of double-dealing, laid down their arms and resumed their more profitable pursuits of peace as if no quarrel had ever existed between them and their imperialistic allies. But Rome, unable to take in good grace her defeat, even if it was at the hands of a gallant foe, had Viriathus assassinated by some of his former followers. This dastardly action broke the resistance of the Iberians and paved the way for

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(6) Williams, H. S. Historians' History of the World,

Vol. V, Roman Republic, Chaps 10-12. New York, 1907.

the easy conquest of the Peninsula by Caesar, who thus reduced her to a Roman province.

Undaunted as they had been in war, the Iberians proved to be no less earnest in their determination to become worthy Roman citizens. The thoroughness with which they incorporated and assimilated the civilization of their conquerors and former enemies is truly astonishing. Language, customs, law and religion became so thoroughly Roman to the smallest detail that in a short time Hispania became more Roman than Rome herself. Aqueducts, bridges, roads, circuses, temples, and many other manifestations of the Roman life in its highest form are still to be found everywhere in Spain and Portugal as imperishable monuments to the Hispanic extraordinary adaptability to the most diversified circumstances. The great Latin writers who followed the Golden Age of Augustus, such as the two Senecas, Columela, Quintilian, Lucanus, Marcial, and a host of others, were natives of the Iberian peninsula. Some of the best Roman emperors, like Trajanus, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, and Teodosius sprang up from the ranks of the Hispanic gentry. It was in Lusitania that, during the Social Wars, and under the leadership of Sertorius, Roman civilization and Roman traditions kept all their purity, and were saved from the effects of wholesale proscriptions as well as the indiscriminate importation into the metropolis of the most heterogeneous and disintegrating foreign elements.

With the increasing disorders and corruption of the imperial court, the traditional civic virtues of Rome began to decline at a very alarming rate. Spain, along with the other provinces of the empire, was made to pay heavy tribute not only to maintain the lavish extravagance of her masters but also to enrich the

numerous officials who were sent there for no other purpose than to plunder the people. No wonder that when the northern barbarians—Suevi, Alani, Vandals, Ostrogoths and Visigoths—descended upon her, Spain not only did not repulse them but in many instances helped them to make themselves the masters of the Iberian peninsula.

After much strife among the different barbarian tribes for the sole possession of a country which, to them, must have looked like the gardens of Eden, the Visigoths succeeded in establishing their rule and a semblance of order. However, their ascendancy proved to be anything but a blessing and a success. In the two odd centuries of their mastery of Spain the Visigoths did not make any great and very important contribution to the civilization and progress of their adopted country or of the world at large. On the contrary, they were unable at any time even to organize a strong central government or bring any particular brand of prosperity to their new home, as the Romans did before them and the Arabs were to do after them. Their court was a hotbed of quarrels, intrigues, fratricidal plots and murder; and the confusion, anarchy and lawlessness that went on among the other classes of Spain's new masters made them an easy prey of another Mediterranean people who arose in the East and, in a single generation, carried their triumphant banners from Mecca to Damascus and from Isphahan to the Columns of Hercules.

## 6.

It happened in 711. The Visigothic monarchy was in a state of utter demoralization and decay, and Al Andalus (the land of the Vandals, as the Arabs called Spain) could not fail to be the strongest temptation for the sons of the thirsty desert. Led by

Tarik, the Arabs leader on the promontory of Calpe, which henceforward was called Geb-al-Tarik (Tarik's headland or mountain), that is, Gibraltar. The forces of King Rodrigo met the enemy on the banks of Guadalete river and were destroyed. The king himself was never heard of again. Terror and panic seized the Visigothic nobility, who fled before the enemy until they found safety beyond the passes of the Asturian Mountains. The people, indifferent to the fortunes of their oppressors, did not offer any serious resistance. Mollified by several generations of an easy life, those Northerners had lost that martial spirit which was one of the most distinguished of their characteristic virtues. So the conquest of Spain by the Arabs was accomplished with remarkable swiftness.

Soon after the conquest of Spain the dynasty of Mohamed, with its seat in Damascus, was overthrown. Abderrahman, one of its youngest representatives, fled to Egypt, and thence to Spain through north Africa. As the descendant of the Prophet he was acknowledged by the Arabs of Spain as his lawful successor and proclaimed Caliph and the true leader of the Faithful.

It was a happy choice because Abderrahman was without doubt one of the most enlightened of Mohamedan princes of his age and the most deserving of enduring fame. His enlightened spirit was not subservient to the Mohamedan tenets, for he was most liberal and tolerant. The arts, sciences, and literature, as well as agriculture, irrigation, navigation, and commerce, interested him more than the slaying of infidels or making them followers of the Prophet. Cordoba, the seat of the Spanish Caliphate, became the greatest and most shining center of enlightenment in all Europe of that day. It was the center of attraction for all scholars

—philosophers, astronomers, mathematicians, poets, artists of every kind—irrespective of race, color, or creed. The best library of Christian Europe of the VIIIth century, that of Charlemagne numbered 300 volumes, while that of Cordoba numbered six hundred thousand. Most of the Greek classics, especially on philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, etc., were made known to Christian Europe by the Arabs of Spain.

The dynasty of Abderrahman lasted for about a century, during which time the light of Arabic Spain shone throughout Europe and the East. Magnificent monuments were built in this and succeeding generations. The Alhambra of Granada, the Mosque (now Cathedral) of Cordoba, the Alcazar of Seville, are only three among many masterpieces built during the meteoric career of these sons of the desert.

## 7.

With the extinction of the Abderrahman dynasty an epoch of great disorder began in the Spanish dominions of the Arabs, and they became the easy prey of their old enemies who had fled before them and were awaiting in the inaccessible hiding places of Covadonga, behind the mountains of Asturias.

After the panic caused by the swiftness with which the Arabs overran most of Spain, and when the invading forces were being thinned out in their movement northward, the Spaniards rallied around Pelayo, the nearest of kin of King Rodrigo, and, protected by the natural defenses of the Asturian mountain range, succeeded in preventing the Arabs from making further advances. The petty-kingdom of Asturias was organized and became the focus of resist-

ance against further inroads by the unbelievers and the beginning of the Spanish reconquest, which was to last to the end of the XVth century.

Though initiated by the remnants of the Visigothic nobility the reconquest soon became a genuinely popular movement where the humblest of vassals had the opportunity of becoming leaders and founders of principalities or kingdoms. Thus it is that the exploits of Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, as sung in the great Spanish epic—Canto de mio Cid—are truly representative of the spirit that animated the Spanish people in their heroic struggle of centuries for the liberation of their homes and the triumph of their beliefs.

It was in this heroic struggle for their homes and ideals that they developed many of the characteristic traits that were to distinguish them throughout the course of their eventful history. A great loyalty to their God and their King was a necessary condition of ultimate success, and was responsible, to a great extent, for the spirit of religious intolerance which at times fell so heavily on all kinds of dissenters. The continuous and often amicable contact of the two adversaries—the followers of the Cross and those of the Crescent—gave to each other ample opportunities to bestow, or to receive, many acts of generosity and forbearance, and thus arose that spirit of courteousness and chivalry for which the Hispanic peoples are so justly famous. That peculiar tone of dignity in their demeanor, which the uninitiated call Spanish pride and are wont to view with contempt, has its source in an unquenchable thirst for liberty and freedom, and results from their deep sense of absolute equality with all their fellow beings.



Their loyalty to their king or leader was not synonymous with abjection and servility. Rodrigo Dias de Bivar reproached his king and acted without his leave when he felt that the monarch had overstepped his rights. The lowest beggar in the streets walks with head erect and as proud in his rags as the grandee in his richest panoply, and far from cringing before him, he approaches and addresses him as an equal, though with that deep and genuine respect which he himself feels he is entitled to. Nor is the grandee surpassed in courtesy and the spirit of true democratic fellowship, for the Spanish social distinctions, great as outwardly they may appear, do not affect one's personal dignity, or that sense of innate equality which is the possession of all, regardless of station, titles, or wealth.

Being one of the most synthetic of races, possessing one of the richest funds of ethnical and historical experiences, and having tasted of the discomforts of the battlefield for almost eight continuous centuries in their struggles with the Moors, the Spaniard acquired an extreme adaptability to all climates and conditions of life, an amazing indifference to pain and discomfort, a frugality and abstemiousness that are proverbial. Of such mettle were made those conquistadores who, though sprung from even the humblest walks of life, wrote in the New World the greatest and most glorious epopee the world has ever seen.