

The Catholic Record

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HOW BELGIUM SAVED EUROPE

Before the War "the Belgian people were only known to the world as a prosperous, industrious, resourceful people, trained in all the arts of peace."

Dr. Charles Sacleo is a Belgian of Dutch extraction who, unlike 95 per cent. of his fellow countrymen, is not a Catholic. Yet despite his twelve years residence in Edinburgh, as a University professor and representative of Belgium in the Scottish Capital, his first-hand knowledge of the greatness of the British Empire has not lessened his patriotic pride in glories of the land of his nativity.

Apart from the military, political and artistic interest of the subjects, there is, therefore, he writes, in "How Belgium Saved Europe," an emotional and imaginative appeal which no other chapter of this war is able to call forth in quite the same measure.

We are reviewing a book which we hope every subscriber of the RECORD will read. We shall confine ourselves, practically, to quotations, trusting to the intelligence of our readers without drawing obvious conclusions.

"Again it was the defence of Liege which proved the decisive factor after the beginning of hostilities. It allowed France to complete its mobilization. It destroyed the legend of German invincibility. The enormous importance of the resistance of Liege was still further enhanced by a very natural but very grievous mistake of the French Generalissimo which very nearly proved irreparable and which might prematurely have ended the war in favor of Germany."

The book was written, naturally, some months ago. Subsequent developments have not called for the slightest modification of our author's views and conclusions. Although Belgium is still fighting we must go back in spirit a few months to get into sympathetic accord with the author when he writes thus:

"Although Belgium is fighting the battles of Europe, Europe mainly owing to the initial French mistake, is not in a position to fight the battles of Belgium. For 'strategic reasons' Belgium must be left to her fate. Brussels must be given up to the tender mercies of the Teuton. For 'strategic reasons' Belgium must continue to fight in tragic isolation. For two critical weeks the Allies do not appear, and when they do appear it is not in order to co-operate, to come to the rescue, to save Belgium from German occupation."

"Because the German invader chooses to revert to the barbaric stage, the Belgians have to revert to the nomadic stage. Belgium still continues to fight in tragic isolation. Belgium still continues, inch by inch, to defend her native soil."

Dr. Sacleo is not a Catholic. Yet he is the close friend of Belgium's Catholic King, and the appointee of Belgium's Catholic government. We are proud of the fact. Taken in connection with Cardinal Mercier's immortal pastoral, Dr. Sacleo's book completes the political view of Belgium's all important role in the tragedy that is unfolding before our eyes. Listen again to Dr. Sacleo:

"I do not think that the Belgians merely did their duty. They did infinitely more than their duty. It was not expected of Belgium, it could not be expected of her, that day after day, week after week, she should continue to stand between invading hordes and the allied armies who were preparing for the struggle. It could not be expected of her that she should continue to resist after surrender of her fortresses, after the capture of her capital. It could not be expected of her that she should go on fighting unaided by Great Britain and France, left to the mercy of a ruthless conqueror, with her villages razed to the ground, with her armies bleeding to death, with her women outraged, with her old men and children driven out on the road."

"If Belgium, after offering an honorable resistance, had come to honorable terms, and if Germany in consequence of that Belgian surrender had crushed the French armies as she would certainly have done, Belgium would probably have been the triumph of Germany have become part of the Greater German Confederation. But she would have retained a large measure of autonomy. She would never have become another Alsace-Lorraine, because Germany would still have had a vital interest in promoting the prosperity of Belgium. Antwerp would have risen into the most flourishing port on the Continent, Brussels into the most popular German capital. Belgium would have received an immense accession of wealth and weight instead of remaining a small, insignificant State without influence on the world's affairs. Belgium would have shared more than any other country in the expansion of the German Empire."

"They preferred to remain loyal to national ideals. And the first national Belgian ideal was freedom. For a thousand years the unruly and turbulent Belgian democracies had fought for that ideal. They had asserted it even against Spanish tyranny. They had retained it even under Austrian rule."

Dr. Sacleo, two years before the War, published a book, "The Anglo-German Problem." Despite the flood of similar books since the War, Dr. Sacleo's book holds its place as the best amongst the best. He sadly refers to it as a work intended to prevent the present conflict, hardly noticed before the War, now read by everybody.

Only once in a while does the RECORD review books; "How Belgium Saved Europe" we heartily commend to our readers.

A WORD OR TWO FROM THE FIRING LINE

The Right Rev. Bishop Fallon has received a letter from Captain, the Rev. Edward Gordon Doe, from which we are privileged to publish a few extracts.

France, March 6, 1915. My dear Lord Bishop, — Here I am. But where I am Mr. Censor will not allow me to say. I left Boulogne-sur-mer last Wednesday at midnight and undressed to the extent of removing my collar and belt. I tried to sleep in the railway-coach, but, because of the cold—after a half-hour's doze—I had to go through a series of Swedish gymnastics to restore circulation. Finally at—I had to change cars and, after pacing a dark platform for a full hour, boarded a train at 4 a. m., arriving at about 6 a. m. I entrained again for—arriving at noon. After finding my unit, No 2 Field Ambulance, I was billeted for the night with the parish priest, who received me most kindly. He had been despoiled by the German troops who came into his house and took possession of his silver, his linen, his wine, his food, his watch, etc. They shelled his church to ruins and then burned it, leaving nothing but a heap of blackened stones.

Here at—where we now are, I am again with the parish priest. His new little chapel has escaped destruction. I say Mass here in it daily, and on Sunday at 9 a. m. The men come to confession in the evening, receive Holy Communion the next morning and are in the trenches that night. I buried one poor fellow yesterday; he had been shot through the head but lived long enough to receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. On Monday I am going to visit the troops and see just what arrangements can be made to give them Mass during the week at several central places back of the firing line. I am so near the fight that cannon, machine gun and rifle fire can be distinguished. From my window I can see the German searchlights which light up the whole surrounding territory—including my room. If the Germans had a mind to do so they could very easily drop a shell or two where I am. Easter greetings and best wishes to all. EDWARD GORDON DOE.

and principles throughout the varied struggles which marked the changing conditions of their long and admirable lives. His Lordship's eulogy of these pioneer Catholics was in itself an impressive appeal to their children and grandchildren to perpetuate in a generation whose lives are cast in pleasanter places so far as material comforts go, the virtues and the character developed under harder conditions.

TEMPERANCE

"Drink is doing more damage in this country than all the German submarines put together."—Lloyd George.

Amongst the many consoling things incidental to the War is the worldwide object-lesson in temperance. By temperance, however, though we restrict it just now to the popular acceptance of the term, we do not mean precisely what is meant by over-zealous advocates of drastic temperance legislation.

Underlying the almost universal use of alcoholic beverages is the belief that alcohol in moderation is not only harmless but beneficial. Against that belief unmeasured denunciation of unbalanced temperance enthusiasts dashes itself as the waves against a rock. Slowly the faith—or superstition—in alcohol is giving way to scientific knowledge of its poisonous effects. But scientific knowledge makes very slow progress amongst the masses of the people of any country. Nevertheless the people of all countries have a homely, natural logic which can not escape drawing a conclusion from the great outstanding facts thrust on their attention with regard to alcohol since the beginning of the War.

Great Britain has done the least by way of legislation to restrict the use or abuse of alcohol during this great crisis. Yet even in Great Britain the popular belief in the matter of alcoholic beverages has been vigorously assaulted and visibly weakened. In the terse, downright and quotable sentence at the head of this article, Lloyd George has preached a very effective temperance sermon to the masses of the people who idolize him because they know his sincerity of purpose and fidelity to their best interests.

In Canada we feel the effects of the world lesson which the War is giving in temperance. Saskatchewan proposes to close all bars, and to take the sale of liquor into the control of the Government; and it will not revert to private control unless the people by their votes say so when the question is submitted to them for decision. Whether it turn out well or ill the experiment will be a valuable one for Saskatchewan and for Canada.

Ontario is further restricting the hours of sale and placing the administration of the License law in the hands of a non-political Commission. It is too soon to congratulate ourselves on the taking of this question out of politics. But we have no reason to suppose that this is not an honest effort to do so. Provided the personnel of the Commission is such as to command the confidence and respect of the people, the new departure may mark a distinct and definite advance in sane temperance legislation.

DEAN DOWNEY'S MOTHER LAID TO REST

On Wednesday last week the funeral services of the late Mrs. Stephen Downey were held at Seafort, after which the interment was made in St. Columban.

The presence of the Bishop of the Diocese, of the large number of the clergy, and a congregation which thronged the church, marked the appreciation of a long life of usefulness identified in a special manner with the pioneer days of the Faith in the Stratford to Goderich district of western Ontario. In the days before churches or resident priests the hospitable Downey household was the home of the pastors who ministered to the pioneer Catholic settlers now organized into flourishing parishes; and the commodious dwelling-house was gladly converted into a church for the time being where the Catholics of the neighborhood gathered to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

These facts and his desire to mark his unaffected appreciation of the simple but heroic loyalty and faith of the pioneer Catholics of the district explained the presence of His Lordship Bishop Fallon, who paid an eloquent tribute to the characteristic virtues of the generation now passing away. Some still remain, old and feeble, it may be, yet with faces stamped with the lines of strong character which tell the story of rugged fidelity to Catholic ideals

and principles throughout the varied struggles which marked the changing conditions of their long and admirable lives. His Lordship's eulogy of these pioneer Catholics was in itself an impressive appeal to their children and grandchildren to perpetuate in a generation whose lives are cast in pleasanter places so far as material comforts go, the virtues and the character developed under harder conditions.

The Very Rev. D. J. Downey was the celebrant of the Requiem Mass, assisted by the Rev. P. J. McKeon as deacon, the Rev. F. P. White as sub-deacon, and the Rev. D. J. Egan as master of ceremonies. His Lordship Bishop Fallon presided at the Libera and preached.

The other clergy present were: the Rt. Rev. Mgr. Aylward, the Very Rev. Dean McGehe, the Rev. Fathers Corcoran, Northgraves, Ronan, Brady, Noonan, McCabe, Valentin, McKeon, Egan, Hanlon, Stanley, Laurendeau, Goetz, Hussey, White, Kelly, and F. J. Brennan.

MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES

From the Tablet of London, England, we republish this week an article under the above heading. There are several reasons for so doing. To those who have read in English Catholic papers the heavy casualty list amongst the Catholic officers during the present war, this article will contain nothing very new; to those, however, who know only that amongst the rank and file Catholics were represented out of proportion to their numbers, the fact that amongst the officers, also, the Catholics of the United Kingdom are over-represented may come as something of a surprise. It is not so long since Catholics were debarred by law from holding office either in the Army or the Navy. Therefore we publish in full a list of names which otherwise might be devoid of interest.

When the war is happily over, even in the game of politics it will be difficult to pander to the dying anti-Catholic prejudice of British electors. In Ireland we may confidently hope that our sturdy Orange brothers of the North will see through the political game which keeps alive their distrust, and join hands with their Catholic brothers for the good of Ireland and the Empire. Having fought side by side for ideals and principles equally dear to both Orangeman and Catholic it will be difficult to persuade them that their true interests are antagonistic. Considering the comparatively short time that has elapsed since Catholic Emancipation it will be something of a revelation for the casual reader to find Catholics taking so prominent a place in the army from which they were a generation or two ago excluded by intolerant legislation.

SOCIETY, THE PAPACY, AND PEACE

Leo IX. (1049-54) made peace between the German Emperor and the King of Hungary. His successor, Victor, was instrumental in preventing a war in Germany over the succession to the throne of the Emperor Henry, who died in 1056.

Gregory VII. (1073-85), the famous Hildebrande, championed the rights of the people against the tyranny of the German Emperor Henry IV. The struggle was long and protracted, but Henry had to submit in the end, and make a penitential journey to Canossa, which has since passed into a proverb.

Innocent III. (1198-1216) settled many quarrels between kings, and brought several to a sense of their duty in morals and politics. His intervention prevented bloody wars in Hungary, Poland, and Norway. A more difficult task was his adjudication of the succession to the throne of the Emperor Henry VI. During his pontificate he was also engaged in arranging disputes between King Richard of England and Leopold of Austria; between Alphonus VIII. of Castile and Alphonus IX. of Granada; and between King John of England and Philip of France. In the struggle which was closed by Magna Charta he took the part of the English people against the despotism of King John. "He protected their liberties and their laws," says Cardinal Manning, "and he used his power to restrain the violence of the king."

Honorious III. succeeded Innocent. He effected peace between the warring kings Henry of England and Louis of France. Twenty years later Innocent IV. regulated affairs in Portugal, and settled a dispute between Frederick II. and the King of Hungary.

Nicholas III. (1277-80) made peace in Bologna, Florence, Genoa, Siena and Ancona. Boniface VIII. (1294-1318) dissuaded the German Emperor from his purpose of invading France; made peace in Lombardy, Tuscany, in the Romagna and the Marches, and in other cities and communes of Italy. He saved France a second time from invasion by Alphonus, King of the Romans, and brought about an understanding between Charles II. of Sicily and James, King of Aragon. He made the latter restore to his uncle the kingdom of Majorica, and he gave back their independence to the kingdoms that composed it. He was also instrumental in creating a better understanding between Edward I. and Philip the Fair.

John XXII. (1316-34) successfully intervened on behalf of the persecuted Irish subjects of King Edward II. and was also enabled to bring to a close the devastating war waged between Edward and Bruce. He reconciled the Duke of Cracow and the King of Bohemia, rival claimants for the throne of Poland. The wars between England and France, which includes in its history of bloodshed and destruction the battles of Crecy and Poitiers, also gave the Popes an opportunity of exercising their authority as ambassadors of the Prince of Peace. Benedict XII., Clement VI., and Innocent VI. all strove mightily to bring the disastrous conflict to an end. Finally the disputants agreed to accept the Pope's offer of arbitration, and the treaty of Bretigny was the result.

Gregory XI. (1370-78) reconciled Castille with Portugal, Aragon and Navarre, and made peace between Frederick of Sicily and John of Naples. Nicholas V. (1447-1455) harmonized the Genoese, Venetians, and Florentines; got Germany and Hungary to conclude a treaty of peace; marked out the boundary of Milan and Piedmont; and had the consolation of seeing all Italy at peace by the treaty of Lodi. Innocent VII. (1404-06) reconciled King James of Scotland and his subjects, and, by uniting the White and Red Roses of England by marriage, ended the civil war which had distracted that country for thirty years. Alexander VI. (1492-1503) prevented bloodshed between Spain and Portugal by his famous Bull Inter Caetera, which defined their respective spheres of influence in the West Indies. By that decision the Pope neither pretended to have power to partition the world, of which he has been often so stupidly accused, nor did he intend to destroy actual titles or to create new ones. He was asked by two Catholic powers to give his decision on a dispute, and he gave it—that is all. Few Papal acts have been so misunderstood. It has been one of the chief items of the stock-in-trade of a certain class of writers for whom the history of the Catholic Church is a preserve over which they run smelling like sleuth-hounds after the iniquities of Popes. Had the Pope refused to arbitrate he would have been spared a good deal of calumny, but the Spanish and Portuguese would have nevertheless taken possession of the Indies, with the difference that whereas the Pope defined the limits of their dominions with ink and paper, they would have marked them off with blood. Paul III. (1549-49) used his mediation between the Emperor Charles V. and Francis I., of which the treaty of 1558 was the result. Gregory XV. (1621-23) brought about an understanding between Austria and Spain, Venice, Piedmont and France. Urban VIII. (1623-44) settled a long standing dispute between Germany, France and Spain. During this epoch of the Church's greatest power, from the fall of the Roman Empire to the Reformation, many more instances of Papal arbitration could be recorded. We have given but a sparse selection, but enough has been indicated to enable us to see the great influence for good, for liberty and peace, brought to bear upon society by the Popes of the Middle Ages. And the history of their beneficent action reveals this remarkable fact, that notwithstanding their almost unlimited influence, they never used their power to extend the territory which the course of events brought under their dominion. De Maistre writes: "They have never sought or seized an occasion of extending the Papal States at the expense of justice, whereas no other temporal sovereignty is without that stain; and

at the present time, with all our philanthropy, our civilization, and our literature, there is not, perhaps, a single European Power that is in a position to justify all its possessions before God and man."

The Reformation, by disrupting Christendom, destroyed the influence of the Papacy in the councils of the nations. We shall now proceed to consider what this much vaunted era of "liberty" achieved for the well-being of humanity. COLUMBA

NOTES AND COMMENTS

WHY, IT IS asked, do Germans spell culture with a "K"? Because, forsooth, Britain rules the "C's."

AN ARTICLE in the February Fortnightly Review, on "The Vatican and the War," by Mr. Robert Dell, "ex-Catholic" and ex-Modernist (for he seems to have abandoned even the flimsy pretence of the latter to Christian profession), is conclusive proof, if any were needed, of the wisdom and prescience of Pius X's unmaking of that insidious imposture, answering a correspondent, the Dundee Catholic Herald says that although an Irishman, Sir John French, Commander-in-Chief of His Britannic Majesty's Forces in Flanders, is not, as some have opined, a Catholic. One sister, however, Mrs. Charlotte Despard, is a convert to the Faith, and a zealous participant in many Catholic charitable and social activities. In this Catholic relationship General French is emphatically not without company. The family of position or title in England that does not number one or more converts in its ranks is the exception.

THE RELIGIOUS belief of those of high rank especially in the French Army has been the subject of much interested speculation in England and America since the outbreak of the War. The not unnatural impression has been that since infidelity reigned supreme in the Government, its appointees, civil or military, were prone to be of that complexion. Not necessarily so. Even the truculent Masonic Ministers of France have been more alive to their own and their country's welfare than that, and, as the composition of the Army in the trenches proves, have known whereto look for loyal and efficient service.

THE SUBJECT was debated in the columns of our New York Jesuit contemporary, of January 9th last, at which time the religious belief of the more prominent French Generals was thus tabulated: Pau, admirable Catholic; Foch, very good Catholic; D'Amande, a Catholic but less praiseworthy; De Castelnau, practical Catholic; Joffre, once a Mason; no longer such, but, by general consent, not a Catholic. That however, was in January and much has eventuated since then. The general revival of religion in the Army has spread up as well as down, and, according to the Glasgow Observer, more recent advice goes to show that the Generalissimo of the Franco-British Forces has, in the words of Shakespeare, "clapped into his prayers."

OUR READERS may be interested in seeing what the now ultra-familiar "Tipperary" looks like in Hindustani. It has been translated into almost every language under the sun, a version in Zulu even having appeared in the press. The following Hindustani version appeared originally in the Pall Mall Gazette. We are not aware that it has heretofore been printed in Canada. The translator, Mr. F. M. O'Connor, it is perhaps unnecessary to say, is an Irishman. Thus runs the chorus:

Burra dur hai Tipperary, Bahoot lumbah, Koonch wo, Burra dur hai Tipperary, Saki pas ponchayay ko. Ram Ram Piccadilly, Salaam Leicester Square, Burra, burra dur hai Tipperary, Lakin dill hooaye plus gayah

If the dusky warriors from the East sang like that as they charged the German trenches, the terror they are said to have inspired is scarcely matter for wonder.

"AMONG THE many varied gifts bestowed by God in such abundance upon Robert Hugh Benson," writes Cardinal Bourne, "was the power of setting forth in very simple words, but with deep intensity of feeling, the great mysteries of religion." In nothing that Mgr. Benson has written has this faculty been more noticeably manifested than in the little posthumous drama, "The Upper Room." Those who read it, further says the Cardinal, will realize with new vividness the meaning of Our

Lord's Passion, every detail of which has been familiar to properly instructed Catholic children from childhood. And those who have the good fortune to see it portrayed in accordance with the author's spirit and his minute directions will surely be drawn closer to their long suffering Redeemer, and be enabled the better to contemplate the stupendous mystery which the Church throughout the world is this week celebrating in mingled joy and penitence.

THE DRAMA is constructed on lines similar to the Mystery plays of pre-Reformation times, but so modernized as to be readable and understandable by children or by the unlearned. The Redeemer, though necessarily the centre and substance of the drama, is so by suggestion rather than direct presentation, for, as is fitting in so sacred a theme, He does not Himself appear. Two of the principal characters are Achaz, landlord of the Upper Room, and Samuel, his servant, both devout disciples of the Man of Sorrows, and to the latter of whom, as having waited upon the table at the Last Supper, and been a witness of the scene in the Garden and the subsequent events of Christ's Passion, is mainly committed their recital to the little band assembled again in the Upper Room after the consummation of the Sacrifice on Calvary.

As illustrating the style of the narrative throughout it may be well that we reproduce here one of its heart-stirring scenes. Describing the seizure of Christ in the Garden, the boy Samuel thus addresses his Master Achaz.

Sir! I followed down, Out through the gate behind them; crossed the stream And up the hill. 'Twas Judas led the way. I saw him! When they came to where the gate stood barred; one broke it down; and in they went; Searching and shouting through the olive-trees. And then I saw Him; and His Face was streaked As if He sweated Blood; and round about His friends stood all aghast. The flare of light Was all blood-red upon them. And then he, Of Kericho, that led them there, went forth And kissed his Master! "Hail," he said, "All hail!" Ah! bitter hiss! said the Master, then— "He called him 'Friend'!—Friend, whereto art thou come? Betray'st thou with a kiss the Son of Man?" And then he said: "With swords and staves you come To take me! Whom do ye seek?" And all at once They cried out, "Jesus! Jesus of Nazareth!" "Well, I am He," said He; and at the word The crowd went swaying back; and some fell down. The rest ran at Him, shouting. Then one struck A blow: I think 'twas Peter; he of Galilee, The fisherman; and struck young Malchus down, Servant to Calphas—him that kept the gate. And when the Lord saw that, He bade His friend Put up again his sword into his sheath. "For they that take the sword," He said, by sword One day shall perish." Then He heard the man And raised him up. And then they all ran in And seized and bound Him.

THE BOOK is published at the moderate price of 80 cents by Longmans Green and Co., New York, in their usual attractive manner, and contains ten illustrations. It was almost the last work of Mgr. Benson, who, sad to contemplate, did not live to see his drama presented. He left, however, minute instructions as to its mode of presentation, and these are now available for those who will undertake the task. It is especially suitable for production in our Catholic colleges and convents, and we are led to hope that some of our Canadian institutions will avail themselves of it. We can never have too many compositions of the kind. The book in itself is a very attractive memorial of a man whose joy it was, as Cardinal Bourne so well says, to make known by so many methods during his sojourn in this world, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, upon Whom, it is by so many souls to whom he was a light and a guide, hoped and believed his eyes now gaze in perfect peace and contentment.

ANOTHER LONGMANS' book which has greatly interested us is the Life of Father William O'Brien Pardon, of the Society of Jesus, who during his