

An Hour with the Editor

IRISH HISTORY

Danish incursions into Ireland continued, with more or less interruption, for a period of two centuries. Modern Irish historians endeavored to make light of the extent of the conquests of these Northern adventurers, but there is no room for doubt that they embraced at one time or another the greater part of the island. The records of this period are very obscure and incomplete. Father Thebeau explains this by saying that the sufferings of the bards were such that they had neither time nor inclination to preserve the history of their distress; at the same time he refuses to accept the traditions of the Irish peasantry, which attribute many things to the Danish invaders, and says that, in respect to other things, Irish tradition is singularly exact, whereas in respect to the Danish invasion it is wholly at fault. This means little more than that tradition has preserved accounts which are inconsistent with the cherished idea of the unconquerable character of the Irish people. We are left largely to the imagination to call up pictures of the condition of Ireland during the two hundred years, which terminated with Brian Boru's victory at Clontarf; but when we recall what the Norsemen did elsewhere, it is easy to believe that in Ireland they wrought great destruction. It is alleged that in Normandy they completely annihilated the native population, and while there is no ground for suggesting that they repeated this in Ireland, there is little room for doubt that they shed blood without mercy, robbed without pity and committed every conceivable outrage without a sense of shame. The native Irish resisted bravely, and in the end successfully, but the long years of conflict not only arrested the progress of civilization, but caused a reaction to a condition of savagery from which the people had emerged many generations before. Ireland after the invasion was not the Ireland that welcomed St. Patrick with open arms, and from whose schools and colleges learned men had gone forth to spread enlightenment in Continental Europe.

Of the Danish invaders the most terrible leader was Thorgyl, or Turgesius, as he is called in the Latin chronicles. He landed on the northern coast, and forthwith, as the historian Geoghegan says, he assumed in his own name the sovereignty of all the foreigners that were then in Ireland. He marched southward as he went. He attacked Armagh, where seven thousand students were attending the schools, slew, captured or drove into the country this mass of the best youth of Ireland, and slaughtered no less than nine hundred monks. The Primate, Kieran, fled, and Thorgyl, having seated himself upon the primatial throne, proclaimed himself archbishop. He met with little opposition. Indeed, at the time he was laying waste the north, Conor, then Ard-Rhi, was plundering the southeast, and the southwestern tribes were at war with each other. Thorgyl proceeded at his leisure to occupy the country, and to erect forts at the seaports and on islands in the lakes. His fleet patrolled the coast, or brought reinforcements from Norway. More important still was his policy of founding cities, Dublin, Limerick, Galway, Cork, Waterford and Wexford owing their existence to him. The Irish themselves were not builders of cities, such centres of population as had existed up to this time being of recent origin and only clusters of dwellings around churches.

Thorgyl ruled Ireland with a rod of iron. The natives fled from him into the forests, where they lived in utter misery. It seemed, indeed, as if the end of the race was at hand; but the spirit of the people was not crushed, and they rose against their oppressor. Haverty in his history of Ireland says: "The people rose simultaneously, and either massacred them in their towns or defeated them in their fields, so that, with the exception of a few strongholds, like Dublin, the whole of Ireland was free from the Northmen." But the relief was only a respite, for we read in "The Four Masters" that "Amlaf, or Olaf, or Olau, came from Norway in 851, so that all the foreign tribes in Ireland submitted to him, and they extracted rent from the Gaels." For the next three hundred years the Norsemen occupied Dublin, and no less than thirty-five of their rulers governed the city. McForbis, who wrote in 1650, says that in his time most of the merchants of Dublin were descendants of the Norwegian Irish King, Olof Kwaran. Amlaf set about the gradual conquest of the whole island, but he was only partly successful. He established several principalities, and on the whole seems to have been a good administrator. He suppressed the hostility of the Norsemen towards Christianity, and from his time onward there was more or less of a commingling of the invading and native races.

Early in the Eleventh Century the Norsemen, or Danes, as they are frequently called, appear to have determined upon the conquest of what we now know as the British Isles. They succeeded so well in England that in 1013 Sweyn proclaimed himself king of that country; and four years later Canute was acknowledged as sovereign. In an ancient Irish M.S., written about this period, it is said: "The Northmen came at this time to Ireland, with an immense fleet, conveying even their wives and children, with the view of extirpating the Irish and occupying in their stead that very wealthy country, in which were twelve cities, with extensive bishoprics and a king." The Irish Annals say the foreigners were gathered from all the west of Europe, envoys having been despatched into Norway, the Ork-

neys, the Baltic islands, so that a great number came from all parts of Scandinavia, with their families, for the purpose of a permanent settlement." It was this invasion which gave rise to the movement headed by Brian Boru, whose great victory at Clontarf in 1014 was mentioned in the last preceding article of this series. Gradually thereafter the Norse chieftains were replaced by Irishmen, the two races became amalgamated, and the influence of the invaders was exercised chiefly in the inauguration of commercial activity, to which the native Irish had always been absolute strangers.

LEADERS OF HUMANITY

Who have been the leaders of humanity? Not the kings or emperors; not the great soldiers; not even those who have left imperishable records of their deeds as did the builders of the Pyramids. Such men were doubtless leaders of a race or a nation, and the results of their leadership endured for a longer or shorter time; but they were not leaders of humanity. An illustration may make the meaning of the question clear. There is the oft-told story of Alexander and Diogenes. To their contemporaries there could have seemed to be little ground for question as to which was the leader. The one, a potent monarch, a successful soldier, a conqueror of kingdoms, whose greatest regret was that there were not other worlds that he could subdue; the other, a poor philosopher, owning no kingdom but his own mind, asking nothing but what his own intelligence could evolve, except such paltry pittance as served to keep him alive. But we, who look back over a prospective of more than two thousand years, may well doubt as to which of the two mankind has looked most for guidance. "If I were not Alexander," said the young soldier, satiated with conquest, "I would be Diogenes"; but it is not recorded that the philosopher expressed a desire for fame, wealth and power, even as a secondary choice, if denied the kingship of his own intelligence. Not that it would be right to put Diogenes among the first rank of the leaders of humanity; the incident is only related as an illustration of the idea that will form the basis of this and the succeeding articles of this short series.

The leaders of humanity, as we shall regard them, are those whose minds have influenced the human race from their time to the present, and whose teachings are effective today for the reason that men yet turn back to them for guidance and instruction. We call men, who lived in recent years, great if we find ourselves examining what they said in order to know how we should act. For example, almost daily in political life in Canada we hear reference made to what Sir John Macdonald said under certain circumstances; in the United States the ideas of Lincoln are cited as though on certain topics they were the ultimate authority; in Germany the principles laid down by Bismarck are still observed. And such instances might be multiplied. But these men, and others like them, are only looked upon by relatively few people as having spoken with the voice of authority, and their influence is steadily growing less. But there have been men, whose ideas have influenced hundreds of millions of people, have given a character to races, who founded great departments of thought, and whose influence today is as great as ever and shows no sign of diminution. Such men are the real leaders of humanity.

These leaders may be divided into two great divisions, the Oriental and the Occidental. They may be subdivided into the ancient, the classical and the renaissance. In the first subdivision are the men who gave Asiatic thought the trend it has ever since followed; in the classical we place the philosophers of Greece and those who flourished in the Roman Empire about the beginning, and during the early centuries, of the Christian Era; the renaissance are those who came upon the stage in consequence of the revival of learning which followed the Crusades. These divisions and subdivisions to some extent overlap each other, and we shall probably see as we pursue the investigation that this was inevitable. We may find, perhaps, that the lines of demarcation between the various schools of thought are not as distinct as we may be disposed to think; to avoid any possible misunderstanding, and so as not to give offence to any one, Jesus of Nazareth will not be included among the leaders of humanity. There seems to be little doubt that, as the centuries pass He will be found to be the greatest Leader the world has ever seen; but it is better, for reasons that ought to be obvious, that He cannot be compared with others without offending many readers.

Among the leaders of humanity, the first, in point of time, to be mentioned is Moses. He died about the time accepted by Hindu scholars as the probable date of the birth of Gautama Buddha. It is within the range of possibility that these two leaders, doubtless the greatest leaders of whom we have any knowledge, were contemporaries, but even though a few scores of years may have intervened between their respective careers, it is a very notable thing that there should have arisen in the same historic era two men, whose ideas influence the thought of by far the greater part of mankind more than two thousand years after they passed away from the scenes of their activity. The date generally accepted as that of the birth of Moses is 1738 B.C., although some authorities place it as late as 1600 B.C. He was of Hebrew descent, but was educated in the

schools of Egypt. Even without accepting all the details given by Hebrew writers as to the events of his life, which are quite immaterial for the purpose of this article, it must be conceded that he was a remarkable organizer and leader of men. But it is not as such that he will be here considered, but in respect to his influence upon the development of human thought. He may be assigned a supreme place in this respect because to him must be attributed the preservation of the idea of monotheism and of the Deity, not as an abstract proposition, but as an individuality. To the Children of Israel, Moses represented the Deity as saying: "I am the Lord thy God." We think this is unique in the annals of humanity. Hebrew writers, writing after the time of Moses, attributed to Abraham personal intercourse with the Deity; but it is perhaps correct to say that the idea of one Supreme Being, distinct from material creation, and something else than a mere mental conception or necessary inference, a God immanent in the affairs of men had its first expression, so far as we have any historic record, in the proclamation made by Moses at Sinai. This may be stated as the great claim of Moses to be not only the most ancient of the known historic leaders of humanity, but the greatest of them all.

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

Writing to Timothy, the Apostle Paul said: "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness," and he amplifies this by saying, "God was manifest in the flesh." The doctrines of the Christian Church were evolved at a time when the field of knowledge available to those, who were leading the Christian movement, was very limited. This remark is not intended to apply to the writers of the books of the New Testament, but to the ecclesiastical authorities to whom we owe the Church as at present constituted. It is one of the claims made for these Fathers that they were not instructed in the philosophy of Greece, which had become obscured, and only was restored to be the common property of scholars at the period immediately preceding what is called the Renaissance. They knew nothing whatever of the philosophy of India or China. They based their theological and doctrinal ideas to some extent upon their understanding of Hebrew literature, in part upon Roman materialism, in part upon Norse and Teutonic mythology, and in part upon their understanding of the teaching of Christ and the Apostles. What the result might have been if they had had access to the other existing fabrics of human wisdom, we cannot of course say; it may be recalled by those who have followed this page for some time that what was called Neo-Platonism, a revival of Grecian philosophy, and of which Hypatia was the most distinguished exponent, was utterly condemned by Cyril, the Nubian archbishop, and his teachers were ruthlessly slain. Those in authority absolutely refused to listen for a moment, to those teachers who advanced anything contrary to their own pretensions, or who suggested that others in past ages and other countries had cultivated fields of thought and brought forth fruits that might be examined with advantage. The narrow conceptions which they themselves had formed alone were to be tolerated, and the result is that from their time to the present the Christian Church has confined its teachings to certain lines, absolutely refusing to recognize that there can be good in anything else, and setting itself against everything that seemed to be opposed to its own pretensions. From this cause arose the long and bitter controversy between Science and Religion. The Church would not listen to reason and placed its ban upon logical deductions from ascertained facts, because those deductions appeared to conflict with its dogmas.

No one thing taught by the Church has formed a more important part of its doctrine than what St. Paul called "the mystery of godliness," or in other words, the manifestation of God in the flesh. At the very time this mystery was forming the subject of controversy in the lands around the Mediterranean, it was held by millions of people in the East. Indeed, the incarnation of the Deity was for centuries the fundamental idea of the religious faith of all the vast host which followed the teaching of Buddha. Long before the Hebrew prophets foretold the coming of One who would be the Son of God, it had been taught by the philosophers of India and Persia that there had not only been one but several incarnations of the Deity. This idea is the basal thought of Buddhism. Doubtless it has been obscured by a mass of grotesque mythology, but this is not surprising. So great a mystery is necessarily incomprehensible. There are no words in our language to describe it.

But not only in Asia do we find this idea prevalent. The mythology of the North American Indians is full of the same thing. Hiawatha was a divine incarnation; so also was Glooscap; so also was Spibow; so also were other heroes of the Red Men. Greek, Roman and Norse mythology is full of the same idea. We may indeed go so far as to say that the incarnation of the Deity appears to have been the universal belief or expectation of mankind. The Jewish expectation of a Messiah does not stand alone. People in Christian lands have been taught to believe that all other expectations than those of the Hebrews were baseless, just as they have been taught that the creative, preservative, uplifting, omnipotent and supreme Power recognized universally by man-

kind is not the God whom Christians ought to worship. The Hindu philosopher says there is a Deity which is in all and above all, and by whom all things were made and are maintained; the Christian teacher says the same thing; but the latter seems unable to realize that he must of necessity mean the same as the former, for there cannot be two Powers by whom all things were made and are maintained. So also the universal expectation of a divine incarnation is not to be rejected, and it is not inconsistent with the belief that God became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Great indeed may be the mystery; very mistaken may be many who have endeavored to explain it, or have believed they have witnessed it. Buddha may not have a divine incarnation; the nine avatars may all be erroneous conceptions; the other beliefs in incarnation may be without substantial foundation; but it can hardly be denied that if Christian doctrine had been evolved in the light that would have been cast upon it by the belief in incarnation held in previous ages and in countries beyond the sphere of Christian activity, the consequences would likely have been profound.

St. Paul elsewhere wrote: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." In these words, we seem to have a light cast upon the idea of God incarnate. They suggest so perfect a commingling of the divine and human that the mind cannot grasp it. All through the writings of the great Apostle we find this thought of sonship kept to the front. In another place he says we are children of God, and if children then heirs, and joint heirs with Christ. He places before us the idea that we may become as Christ was in relation to God, that we may have God incarnate in ourselves. Truly this is a great and unfathomable mystery.

And yet if we believe in God, if we believe that man is made in the image of the Creator, that is to say, made like unto the Divine, it seems as if we are forced to admit the possibility of our becoming, as it were, storehouses of the divine power. We are all of us conscious that we are something more than of the earth earthly. As mankind has always had the expectation of a divine incarnation, so each of us in his heart of hearts feels that he may at some time and in some inexplicable way become superior to his material surroundings. The Buddhist teaches that we reach this superiority in Nirvana, when we shall, after long stages, become absorbed in the Divine; the Christian teaches that we may become one with God through faith in Christ. The end in each case is the same; the difference is in the process by which the end is reached.

Stories of the Classics

(N. de Bertrand Laguer)

HELEN OF TROY

(Continued)

Nearly twenty years had passed since the Greeks first besieged Troy, and still the result hung in abeyance. Meantime the fair Helen was growing weary of being a captive among the Trojans, and was longing to return to Greece, and resume her union with her wronged husband, Menelaus. Paris, too, had been slain. Philoctetes came with Neoptolemus, Achilles' son, to join the besiegers, having shot him with the marvelous bow and arrow of Heracles. And all of Paris' wonderful beauty had been spoiled by Menelaus, who vented his anger on the dead body of the prince, so that it was only a sorry semblance of the living Paris that was brought back to Helen. So the lady in some secret manner managed to convey a message to Ulysses, and that intrepid chief, disguising himself as a sorely wounded beggar, gained entrance through the gates into the besieged city. Now it had been foretold that Troy would remain impregnable as long as the Palladium, a statue given by Zeus himself to Dandanus, remained in the citadel, and the Trojans had used every artifice to conceal it, constructing other statues similar to it, so that any intending thief might be misled. But Ulysses contrived to capture it, for Helen alone of all within the city recognized him, and revealed the hiding place, and the two had a stolen interview in which they laid plans whereby the fall of Troy might be brought about.

We have read of that monstrous hollow wooden horse which the Greeks constructed, so large that one hundred of the heroes were able to conceal themselves within it, of how the Greek ships one sunny morning were seen by the Trojans to spread their sails and glide away, leaving only their burning tents behind them; of how the Trojans discovering the great horse, parleyed long and earnestly as to what should be done with it, many desiring to offer it as a sacrifice to the gods; of how Laocoon, the priest, having struck the horse with his spear and revealed that it was hollow, was instantly killed by a serpent sent expressly from the sea to destroy him; of how a breach was finally made in the walls of Troy and the wooden horse dragged within; of how, in the night, the Trojans feasted, celebrating the end of the siege, and the Greek heroes, loosening the bolts, freed themselves, and lit the fire sig-

nal recalling the Grecian ships. Troy, assailed from without and within, fell at last, and the destruction was terrible and complete. Neoptolemus, Achilles' son, found the aged King Priam at the altar of Zeus, and killed him there. Little Astyanax, Hector's son, was torn from his mother's arm, and cast from the wall by that same Neoptolemus, though some attribute the wicked deed to Ulysses. Polyxena, Priam's daughter, was slain on Achilles' tomb, and Cassandra, her sister, was given as a prize to Agamemnon, while Andromache, widow of Hector, was led away a captive by Neoptolemus, who, like his father, seems to have known neither clemency nor mercy. Thus were Hector's prophetic words come true:

For that day will come, my soul is assured of its coming:

It will come, when sacred Troy shall go to destruction,

Troy, and warlike Priam too, and the people of Priam.

And yet not that grief, which then will be, of the Trojans,

Moves me so much—not Hecuba's grief, nor Priam my father's,

Nor my brethren's, many and brave, who then will be lying

In the bloody dust, beneath the feet of their foe—

As thy grief, when, in tears, some brazen-coated Achaian

Shall transport thee away, and the day of thy freedom be ended.

Then, perhaps, thou shalt work at the loom of another, in Argos,

Or bear pails to the well of Messeis, or Hyperia,

Sorely against thy will, by strong Necessity's order.

And some man may say, as he looks and sees thy tears falling:

See, the wife of Hector, that great pre-eminent captain

Of the horsemen of Troy, in the day they fought for their city.

Some man will say; and then thy grief will redouble

At thy want of a man like me, to save thee from bondage.

But let me be dead, and the earth be mounded above me,

Ere I hear thy cries, and thy captivity told of.

And what of Helen! We can picture Menelaus of Troy taken, seeking her who had so wronged him, who had caused such endless death and suffering; and if revenge is the strongest emotion that possesses him, we cannot wonder. Twenty years have gone by, Menelaus has grown sick and weary with bloodshed. He has forgotten how his wife's beauty once enslaved him, and remembers only the infamy she has heaped upon him.

He finds her hidden in the palace of Deiphobus, and when she rises to meet him, lifting her face, "astonishment takes possession of his soul before the shining of her beauty, so that he stands immovable like a dead tree, which neither north nor south wind shakes. . . . Her heart leaps, and her whole form is as lovely as Aphrodite was when the gods discovered her with Ares in the Hephaestus. Down to the ships she comes with Menelaus hand-in-hand; and the people gazing on the glory and the winning grace of the faultless woman, were astonished; nor could they dare by whispers or aloud to humble her with insults; but gladly they saw in her a goddess, for she seemed to all what each desired."

So Helen and Menelaus returned to Sparta, and for many happy years dwelt together in comfort and peace, the gods taking them at last to dwell in the Elysian fields for all eternity.

THE MEMORIES THAT CLING

'Tis an ill wind that blows nobody good, and when a sudden gust removed Blenkinsopp's hat his bad language was cut short by the familiar face of the little old man who returned it to him.

"Surely we've met before, sir!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, I seem to know your face," said the old fellow. "Did you go to Spankell school?"

"By Jove, I did!" cried Blenkinsopp, beaming. "Yet me see. Who was the head in your time?"

"Don't recall," answered the old man enthusiastically. "But I was there the year Jones played half-back, and Robinson ran up a score of 67 not out against Waterhouse."

"Ah, wasn't Dr. Bigbow the headmaster?" cried Blenkinsopp.

"Couldn't possibly tell you," retorted the old man. "I never had a mind for details."—Answers.

THINGS BETTER UNSAID

She (at the masquerade)—Do you think my costume becoming?

He (with enthusiasm)—Yes, indeed; but you would be lovely in any disguise.—Illustrated Bits.

The Stranger—Are you quite sure that was a marriage license you gave me last month?

The Official—Of course! What's the matter?

The Stranger—Well, I've lived a dog's life ever since.—Sketch.