

of all fashion's protests — they crowned with their winsome, blushing blossoms the happy little bride. —Mary T. Waggaman, in Benzinger's.

CATHOLIC SLOVENIA

By Dr. Frederick Funder

Conditions in Slovenia, one of the provinces taken from Austria to form part of Jugoslavina, are vividly pictured by a distinguished Catholic of the latter country now visiting in Vienna. At the request of the N. C. W. C. correspondent, this personage has consented to describe for the benefit of American Catholics the former prestige of Catholicism in Slovenia, the trials of the Church and her children during the War, and the harbingers of a Catholic revival in the midst of the poverty, persecution and demoralization which the Catholics there are still experiencing.

"In speaking of Slovenia," he said, "I mean those districts which are inhabited by the Slovene population and which have been incorporated into the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Slovenia comprises Carniola except the portions which, with Istria, belong to Italy, Styria in its Yugoslav districts, the valley of the Meis, and the so-called Seelaenderbecken, and Murland. The population of these districts is less than a million.

A PEOPLE OF CULTURE

"Under the leadership of the great organizer and social politician, Monsignor Kreck, the Slovene people had attained before the World War a very high standard of intellectual culture, such as only few other nations in the Old Monarchy could boast. They were well organized, politically, religiously and educationally, and the whole public and private life of the nation was based on Catholic principles. Among their representatives in the former Austrian Parliament there were but four "Liberals" and but a few Socialists. In the Diet of Carniola itself the Catholic majority constituted as it were an invincible phalanx against the Liberal Socialist minority. In the Diet of Graz also the representative of the Slovenes were almost wholly Catholic, and the same was true of Carinthia.

"Great Catholic meetings, gymnastic exhibitions, pilgrimages to Palestine, Rome and Lourdes, large attendance at the Eucharistic Congress in Vienna—all these things attracted the attention of the whole world to this small Catholic nation, otherwise often almost unknown abroad even by name. This success was due to the activity displayed at home. Under Monsignor Kreck's supervision there existed a workmen's association, which was a model of its kind, particularly in point of its enterprise in attacking the problem of housing for the working classes.

"The rural loan associations and the cooperative societies in the agricultural districts were an economic power which even the Jews were unable to check or control. The most important of all non-political educational institutes was the Slovene Christian Social Association, many of whose members were from even the most distant mountain villages. Almost needless to say, there was in every parish an assembly hall near the church, and some communities even had their own buildings for meetings and libraries and the like.

THEIR PASSION FOR READING

"The Slovene people, having what amounts to a passion for reading, care was taken to gratify it by providing plenty of material. The Hermandades fraternity in Klagenfurt, founded by the late Bishop Slomack and the Carinthian leader of the Slovenes, Andreas Einspieler, had about 90,000 members, and political, religious and professional papers were widely distributed throughout the country.

"The ravages of the War have sadly afflicted the Slovene Catholics. Though the first years following the War have passed with all the material and moral wreckage they involved, I am not yet able to estimate the present state of things. Many sprouts are shooting from the ground that has been loosened, but no one now knows whether they are wheat or cockle. The present aspect is not very edifying for the Slovene Catholics.

"They are, so to speak, excluded from every movement that is important in public life. Having obtained fifteen mandates at the elections for the legislative body they have formed, together with certain Croat representatives, an opposition party and the constitution which was proclaimed on June 28, 1921, containing certain provisions (among them the 'pulpit paragraph') and other laws on the subject of schools and matrimony, challenge their special attention. On the strength of the constitution religious teaching in all schools has been specified as an optional branch of study. This decree, issued by the Upper School Council for Slovenia, is not yet in force.

"The Democratic Minister of Education and Science, Probievic, has given orders that the gymnastic exercises in all public and secondary schools should follow the principles—both technical and cultural—of the liberal Sokol. The authorities are supervising the classes held for Catholic recruits and certain officers have used exceptional measures when dealing with soldiers who belonged to the Catholic Club, Orle.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS SUFFER

"In Jugoslavia Catholic episcopal sees have remained vacant for years. Catholic parishes have been reduced to poverty, being dependent for the present entirely on voluntary contributions from the parishioners, the matter of the former Austro-Hungarian public funds and the war debt having thus far not been settled. Subsidies granted by the State amount to very little now, and the Catholic training schools are much impoverished. The same is true of other Catholic schools and of works of charity.

"However sad the outward appearance of the Catholic life of the Slovenes may be in their new home, it is nevertheless true that a vigorous movement is making itself felt once more. It is a misfortune to have lost their leader, Monsignor Kreck, who died four years ago. Several others, too, have disappeared from the arena. Hofrat Povse, who undertook the organization of the peasants, and Monsignor Zitnik, a most gifted and industrious man, who spent his life and his energies in the service of the people. Still others—priests and laymen—have withdrawn, embittered and discouraged.

"In spite of all this, a fresh impulse is apparent. Well versed in the art of educating nations, the Catholic Church is endeavoring to help the people to regain their spiritual strength. Although shut out from public life, every possible effort is being made by the Catholics to accomplish the work of organization. A number of Catholic educational institutions, gymnastic clubs and economic and political associations are coming into existence and activity again, with the co-operation of the people and with the rich experiences acquired during the War.

"The people, in part strong and well, and in the measure recovered from the recent illness, are like a child that has been picked up after a tumble on their feet once more, drying their tears and speeding away anew. This feeling prevails also among the enemies of the Catholic Slovenes. They loudly proclaim in their papers that Catholicism is doomed to become 'fossil,' yet they dare not assert their political and financial power to the extent they would wish.

HOPE IN NEW UNIVERSITY

"The critical state of affairs will be shown when the next elections take place. In order to ascertain which party and which principles of life are to govern the Slovene people, it is above all important that the political structure of the State be consolidated and the constitution carried out. Everything is very promising. Especially the Catholic faculty of the new university of Laibach seems destined to be the center of a rich and powerful Catholic movement. The public scientific lectures have a large attendance, and both the scientific periodicals, Bogoslovni and the more popular Cas, are notably full of matter of intrinsic value."

VATICAN LIBRARY

TO HAVE SECTION FOR IRISH BOOKS

By Monsignor Enrico Pucci

A distinctive Irish section of the Vatican Library has been created as a result of the reception of the Marquis MacSwiney of Mashaglass by His Holiness Pope Pius XI. recently, when a fine collection of works on Irish history and archeology was presented. These books will be placed in a newly opened section, close to the British section, where, previously, the few books dealing with Ireland in the library were included.

The audience of Marquis MacSwiney with the Pope took place on the eve of the feast of St. Patrick. His Holiness received with satisfaction his first meeting with the Marquis in 1896, when the latter was doing research work in the famous Ambrosian library, and gave every assurance of the special benevolence of the Holy See towards the Irish people, whose history in the past had shown such splendid devotion to the faith and whose future was so bright with promise.

"Inquired about IRISH IN U. S. He inquired about the strength of the Irish in the United States and being informed that they numbered about 20,000,000 asked if these exiled sons might be inclined to return to the land of their forefathers, being given better conditions. The Marquis MacSwiney replied that many undoubtedly would do so, pointing out that already in his own county of Kerry several had come back, had bought land and had settled down as farmers.

"Peasants," said the Pope, in expressing his pleasure at these facts, "are the backbone of nations. In the case of Ireland the peasants will represent the greatest moral power of the country because of the depth of their faith and the purity of their customs. They should prove an adamant barrier against the forces which everywhere strive to cause the upheaval of social order. Industry represents the transformation of matter, whereas agriculture represents the direct produce of matter, and the peasant, being in immediate touch with Nature's primitive force and beauty, his thoughts will soar unto God, Creator and Master of all things."

The Pope recalled that when Nuncio to Poland, then being revived into national life, he had written from Warsaw to Rome, to the Vatican library, so that there should be a special section set aside in it for Poland.

Surveying the books the Holy Father said: "So this is the gift of the Catholics of Ireland?" "No, Your Holiness," replied the Marquis, "this is the tribute of the scientific men of Ireland of all denominations of creed and of all political opinions; it is the homage of scientific and literary Ireland to the Holy See, patron of literature and science. Each of these volumes bears an autographic dedication, with the author's own signature."

The Marquis also explained that a committee had been formed for the collection of rare works that are out of print.

CHARACTER OF COLLECTION

A complete set of the publications of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland was included in the collection presented by the Marquis MacSwiney. Among the authors whose books were presented to the new section of the Vatican library were included: Dr. Douglas Hyde, Dr. R. I. Best, E. C. R. Armstrong, Dr. William Butler, Dr. George O'Brien, Herbert Wood, R. Lloyd Prager, W. G. Strickland, Dr. George Sigerson, Mrs. A. S. Green, Rev. George O'Neill, S. J., Rev. J. Corcoran, S. J., and P. S. O'Hearthy. The collection makes the Vatican library richer in Irish books than all the state libraries of Italy. It is expected to be a magnet that will increase greatly the interest of Irish scholars throughout the world in the Vatican treasures.

POLES HONOR NEW POPE

HIS BRAVERY IN FACE OF BOLSHEVSKI DRIVE NOT FORGOTTEN

Warsaw.—Pope Pius XI. is known to Eastern Europeans not only as a consummate diplomatist and a great and generous churchman but also as a man of unshakable courage and unquestionable justice. This knowledge of the new Supreme Pontiff the people of Eastern Europe gained during the period of more than three years he served as Delegate Apostolic and Nuncio to Poland, which was far part of that time in the hands of the Teutonic Allies and for the remainder of his official sojourn a battleground of factions.

It was in April, 1918, that Doctor Ratti was taken from his beloved books and manuscripts in the Vatican and sent as the representative of Pope Benedict XV. to Poland. The War was then at its height, Germany and Austria were at the zenith of their military successes, Russia was tottering to complete collapse. The ink on the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was hardly dry. Poland was held by the German-Austrian troops, Prince Leopold of Bavaria was governor of Poland and General Beseler was commander of the army of occupation.

SOON GAINED GOOD WILL

A Council of Regency was established at Warsaw with Archbishop Kakowski, now Cardinal, Prince Lubomirski and Baron Ostrowski as its directing members. This Council was by no means popular among the Poles, who regarded it as an instrument of German domination. Monsignor Ratti, as the Apostolic Delegate, had the mission of an ecclesiastical visitor. His jurisdiction was confined wholly to spiritual and religious affairs. In this he found himself greatly handicapped; but he accomplished much, nevertheless. Notwithstanding his Italian nationality he succeeded in gaining the good will of all parties and in removing much of the popular diffidence.

The Holy See then extended Monsignor Ratti's work to the whole of the occupied Russian territory. His first care here was to establish a regular ecclesiastical regime in those immense regions where all was disorganization as a direct consequence of the War and where, moreover, the Catholic Church's jurisdiction had never been entirely free from the interference of the Russian Government. Dr. Ratti provided for the re-establishment of the numerous sees which had been suppressed by the former Czar's Government.

In spite of the revolutions and counter revolutions which disturbed the former territory of Russia, Dr. Ratti created an organization such as never had existed under the Czarist regime. He was particularly successful in rehabilitating and reorganizing sees which had been crushed in former years. In November, 1918, the Armistice was signed. Austria-German power crumbled, and Poland regained her national independence. A Regency was inaugurated under Marshal Pilsudski, a constitutional assembly was summoned, and Dr. Ratti, as the Pope's Envoy, was the first to greet the new independent Polish State.

Immediately there arose new and grave questions affecting the title and tenure of the property held by the Catholic Church. The Poles had learned under Russian tutelage to clamor for the partition of the great estates which in part comprised ecclesiastical property attached to churches and bishoprics. Monsignor Ratti assembled all the Bis-

hops and, acting partly on their advice, declared that he was not opposed to a division of his property if it was to be undertaken with the understanding of the ecclesiastical authorities and without detriment to the religious and spiritual interests of the people.

SETTLED LAND QUESTION

Dr. Ratti was indefatigable in his efforts to settle this question, and, as part of his program to that end, constituted an episcopal commission to study a technical solution. This commission of the Bishops was afterwards recognized by the new Polish Government from which Dr. Ratti obtained a promise that the land question would not be settled without reference to the position which the Church was to hold under the new Polish State. By his efforts he succeeded in having two clauses voted and inserted in the Polish Constitution. The first of these was a provision that the Catholic Church held the first position in the new Polish State; the second was a stipulation that any measures respecting the Catholic Church were to be taken in accord with Rome. This work was so satisfactory to Pope Benedict that it was decided to re-establish the ancient Nunciature in Warsaw. Monsignor Ratti was appointed to the post and shortly afterwards (in July, 1919), was promoted to the titular archiepiscopal see of Lepanto.

In the fine old Cathedral of Warsaw, on October 28, 1919, Dr. Ratti was consecrated Archbishop by Cardinal Kakowski. The consecration took place in the presence of the entire Polish Episcopate and of a large number of the new Constituent Assembly. It was the first time that a Papal Nuncio had been raised to the dignity of Archbishop in the country to which he was accredited, and showed the great advance which the former Vatican librarian had made in the esteem and confidence of Pope Benedict.

When the question of the plebiscite in Upper Silesia came to the fore, Archbishop Ratti was especially appointed the Ecclesiastical High Commissioner at the request of the Republic of Poland, Germany and the Inter-Allied Commission. He exerted all his power and influence to calm the parties to the controversy, and this endeavor at times exposed him to all kinds of bitter criticism and attacks from both camps. Eventually, however, his impartiality and sound judgment were recognized.

FREED MANY PRISONERS

During Monsignor Ratti's more than three years in Poland he devoted himself to the solution of numerous problems, to works of international charity and relief, and to the liberation of prisoners from the Bolshevists. In these labors he was strikingly successful. Among those whose release he obtained from Russian prisons were the Bishop of Minsk and the Archbishop of Mohileff.

Poles, both Catholic and non-Catholic, Jews and Gentiles hold the memory of Archbishop Ratti—now the Sovereign Pontiff—in affectionate regard. They recall the magnificent work done by him as Papal Nuncio during the painful period of suffering and hunger following the War. The little children of Eastern Europe are especially unfaithful in their gratitude for this generous dispenser of milk and bread. For Monsignor Ratti distributed some three million Italian lire to the poor and the starving of Poland in the months immediately after the War. This money was provided by Pope Benedict.



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Monsignor Ratti's bravery was in all respects equal to his genius and his generosity. When the Bolsheviki hordes came in a great drive towards Warsaw in 1920 and the officials of the Polish Government and the representatives of other States left the city, seemingly to its fate, Monsignor Ratti stayed at his post and refused to hear the entreaties of the Polish military authorities that he retire to safety. His answer was: "My place is here with the people; my duty is here. I shall not leave. I may be of help."

He who forgets his own interests in the service of God, may be sure that heaven will watch over them better than he could have done himself.—St. Ignatius Loyola.

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