

The Catholic Record

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THE CAUSE OF THE WAR

III. SELF DEFENCE

The German idea of the State which dominates and overshadows the individual, which claims as a right and receives as a patriotic duty the entire devotion and subordination of the individual citizen is not an easy one to us to grasp. Professor James Bryce says:

"The German State is a much more tremendous entity than it is to Englishmen or Americans. It is the supreme power with a sort of mystic sanctity—a power conceived of as it were, self-created, a force altogether distinct from and superior to the persons who compose it."

The philosophy of Evolution has taken possession of men's minds. Not evolution as a biological theory, but a self-existing and self-sufficing "Law of Evolution" to which everything in the world must be ascribed, including all human progress and all social development.

The great leader and prophet of this school is Professor Ernst Haeckel. Its adherents, however, are by no means confined to Germany. An English writer says that the last half of the nineteenth century is one of the most remarkable epochs in the history of human thought.

"The revolution, which began with the application of the doctrines of evolutionary science, and which received its first great impetus with the publication of Darwin's Origin of Species, has gradually extended its scope until it has affected the entire intellectual life of our Western civilization."

Treitschke is the great national historian of the German Empire. Von Bernhardi in his now widely read work merely expounds and applies Treitschke's philosophy of German history.

Thus they apply the familiar principles of evolution to German policy: "Efforts for peace would, if they attained their goal lead to general degeneration as happens everywhere in nature where the struggle for existence is eliminated."

"War is the greatest factor in the furtherance of culture and power." "The inevitableness, the idealism, the blessing of war as an indispensable and stimulating law of development must be repeatedly emphasized."

"God will see to it," says Treitschke, "that war always recurs as a drastic medicine for the human race." "The State is the sole judge of the morality of its own action."

"In fact, the State is a law unto itself. Weak nations have not the same right to live as powerful and vigorous nations."

With these principles and a "healthy egotism" directing Germany's policy, we have not far to seek for the cause of the war. Germany has to-day a population of nearly 70,000,000. It is increasing at the rate of 1,000,000 a year.

There is now practically no loss by emigration. Thirty years ago she was losing her population at the rate of 200,000 a year. These went to strengthen her rivals.

"To civilization at large wrote Treitschke at that time, 'the Anglicizing of the German-Americans means a heavy loss. . . Among Germans there can no longer be any question that the civilization of mankind suffers every time a German is transformed into a Yankee."

Thirty-two years ago Treitschke faced the question of colonial expansion. Here is a passage from his paper on "The Beginnings of German Colonial Policy."

"If our Empire ventures resolutely forth upon the path of an independent colonial policy, it must inevitably face a conflict of interests with England. It was natural and logical that the new great power of Central Europe had to settle affairs with all great powers. We have settled our accounts with Austria-Hungary, with France, with Russia. The last settlement, the settlement with England, will probably be the lengthiest and the most difficult."

Again, in 1882 Treitschke writes pointing out more definitely where German colonial expansion might begin at England's expense:

"The English colonial policy, otherwise everywhere successful, has not been fortunate at the Cape. The civilization that flourishes there is Teutonic, Dutch; and the action of England alternately violent and weak. Has aroused in the brave Boers a deadly and inextinguishable enmity. Since Holland has in the East Indies more colonies than she knows what to do with, it would be only natural that Germany, a kindred nation, should take over in one form or another the protection of the Teutonic people of South Africa, and should enter upon the heritage of the British in an unprotected colony which the Suez Canal has rendered of little worth to England."

But the great opportunity afforded by the Boer War, Germany found herself powerless to seize. Sea-power was the lesson. "Our future lies upon the waters," said the Kaiser. It was not the pronouncement of a dictator; it was the expression of a determination. In 1900 the Reichstag passed a navy bill which declared in its preamble that Germany needed a navy of "such strength that a war, even against the mightiest naval power, would involve risks threatening the supremacy of that power."

For the last fourteen years everyone knows that the competitive struggle of England and Germany in the construction of naval armaments has been limited only by the resources of German revenue. So great was the strain that the Liberals came into power on a policy of reduction of armaments, but so far from being able to redeem their promises they were compelled in simple self-defense to increase enormously naval expenditure.

The entente with France and Russia was another measure for self-defense. It was not an offensive and defensive alliance. England was not bound by it to enter into this war; but she was bound by every consideration of honor as well as by the most elementary considerations of self-preservation to strike with her friends at the outset of Germany's war for "World-Dominion or Down-fall."

We are at war because it is a necessary and unavoidable measure of self-defense on the part of the British Empire against the premeditated and carefully matured plans of German colonial expansion at our expense. And apart altogether from national sentiment, apart from comparative merits or achievements of Germans and English, we are fighting for a great principle—the principle of individual liberty as against the nearest possible modern approximation of the deified State of pagan Rome.

IS THIS THE ANSWER?

In its war summary the other day The Globe poses this riddle:

It is not well to ignore altogether the statements of the Berlin War Office, for sometimes the truth slips past the censor. Yesterday a despatch was sent out saying that the calling out of the Landsturm was declared to be unnecessary, and that enormous numbers of the Landwehr, consisting of men under 39, were still available. The Landsturm consists of men between the ages of 39 and 45. If these assertions are true the German armies in the field are not nearly so large as has been supposed. But are they true? British official reports say that grey bearded men and very young lads are in the firing line. If the Landsturm has not been called out where are the greybeards coming from? Do Germans turn grey in any large numbers before they reach the age of 39? The point is important. If Germany has still great reserves of trained men under the age of 39 the road to Berlin will be longer than most people imagined. The Globe prefers to trust the British reports rather than Berlin's claims. "Bluffing" is one of the German Staff's greatest accomplishments.

R. S. Nolan, an English civil prisoner of war in Germany from the outbreak of hostilities until the 20th of September, has an article in the current Nineteenth Century telling of his impressions and experiences during that time. The following

paragraph may be an answer to The Globe's riddle; at any rate it is entirely at variance with the cherished theory that the war was imposed on an unwilling and helpless people by the influence of the powerful and war-mad military caste:

"To say that the War is popular in Germany is not sufficient; they are heart and soul in it; the whole national life at present is identified with it. Within less than a couple of weeks of the outbreak of war, 1,500,000 had volunteered, and shortly after the numbers reached over two millions—men under and over age and some approaching old age. They admit very heavy losses, and especially heavy losses of officers, but that does not in the least affect their spirit."

ERNST HAECKEL—ANOTHER FALLEN IDOL

In the Open Court, one of the mushroom American publications which are being used in the attempt to turn the people of the United States against Britain and her allies, Professor Ernst Haeckel discusses "England's blood guilt in the world war." England, he says, declared war on Germany ostensibly because of the violation of Belgian neutrality, but in reality because the longed-for moment appeared at last to have arrived for the carrying out of the long-planned attack on the German Empire.

After a series of bitter reflections on British perfidy and hypocrisy, Professor Haeckel continues: "The annihilation of the independent German Empire, the destruction of German life and works, the subjection of the German people to British domination, that is the proud dream of the English Government." Again he declares: "The curse of millions of unhappy human beings is on the head of Britain, whose boundless national egotism knows no other aim than the extension of British dominion over the whole world, the exploitation of all other nations for her own advantage, and the swelling of her insatiable coffers with the gold of all other peoples."

The Toronto News thus summarizes Professor Haeckel's article and proceeds to point out the obvious absurdities of his assertions.

Well, it is refreshing at any rate to have it openly said that this great high priest of Science can be quite absurd in his assertions. These are not his first absurdities. And Ernst Haeckel has a record of "perfidy and hypocrisy" all his own in his zeal for Scientific Truth. But that is, perhaps, a bit too technical to mention here.

However, here are some of Professor Haeckel's ante-bellum assertions:

"The universe, or cosmos, is eternal, infinite and illimitable. Its substance, with its two attributes (matter and energy) fills infinite space and is in eternal motion."

"The two fundamental forms of substance, ponderable matter and ether, are not dead and moved only by extrinsic force, but they are endowed also with sensation and will (though naturally of the lowest grade)."

"Movement is as innate and original a property of substance as is sensation."

"The absurdity of these assertions is obvious," but we have been accustomed to listen to this prophet of a new dispensation with reverence when he spoke in the name of Science.

Still in the name of Science he tells us that:

"The human will has no more freedom than that of the higher animals, from which it differs only in degree, not in kind. In the last [i. e. the eighteenth] century the doctrine of liberty was fought with general philosophic and cosmological arguments. The nineteenth century has given us very different weapons for its definitive destruction—the powerful weapons which we find in the arsenal of comparative physiology and evolution. We know now that each act of the will is as fatally determined by the organization of the individual, and as dependent on the momentary condition of his environment as every other physical activity. The character of the inclination was determined long ago by heredity from parents and ancestors; the determination of each particular act is an instance of adaptation to the circumstances of the moment where the strongest motive prevails, according to the laws which govern the statics of emotion."

Elsewhere he says, "The freedom of the will is not an object for critical scientific inquiry at all, for it is pure dogma based on an illusion, and has no real existence."

It is a good thing that Professor Haeckel's ancestors had no sense of humor or he might have inherited something that would have disturbed his fine scientific scorn for "pure dogma." While Haeckel's obviously absurd assertions merely flouted religion and common-sense he re-

tained the profound respect, even reverence, of English admirers and disciples; but when with equally wonderful scientific intuition he reads English history for us why is he impenetrably stupid, prejudiced or dishonest.

"Sir," said Dr. Johnson, "we know our will is free; and there's an end on't."

How very antiquated the down-right English common sense of Dr. Johnson would seem in many cultured circles of the English-speaking world to-day.

However, if free-will is an illusion and what is infinitely worse—a pure dogma—how can Professor Haeckel bring his critically scientific mind to the study of the question of "England's blood guilt in the world war?" Does he not know that the character of her actions was determined by heredity and each particular act by the laws which govern the statics of emotion? "Guilt!" What an unscientific word! But perhaps Professor Haeckel is only using some of the old free-will terms to influence the statics of emotion on the unscientific American.

In any case it will be well to remember when the war is over the wholesome contempt of German culture for their English imitation. We may then begin to suspect that men who have been so utterly wrong on many things may not be infallible in their scientific dogmatizing about everything.

THE LABOR LEADER'S RETORT

In a letter to the London Times which, it will be remembered took a prominent part in supporting Carson and other disloyalists in their campaign in Ulster, and thus led the Germans to believe that England was on the brink of a Civil War, and could not intervene to protect Belgium, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, M. P., in answer to the charge that some words of his had had a similar effect upon the German mind, says:

"If we are to assume that the enemy is encouraged by the opinions expressed on this side, and that I have to bear some share of that responsibility, how much greater is the responsibility of those of much greater authority who up to the end of July were supporting Civil War in Ulster, who were using language regarding the motives and conduct of Ministers which would have been true only if these men were no better than pickpockets, and who were generally engaged in a propaganda besmirching the whole public life of the country?"

COLUMBA

NOTES AND COMMENTS

WE HAVE not seen in the Canadian daily press any reference to a remarkable article which appeared some weeks ago in the New York Sun, with regard to the innate stamina of the British people as evidenced so strikingly by the present crisis. Great Britain, in the estimation of the Sun writer, presents at the present moment a noteworthy spectacle of national regeneration.

Until three months ago, he considers, she seemed to be plunged into a torpor from which it appeared almost impossible to awaken her. The remainder of the world either gloated or mourned over her decadence. But since the beginning of August there has been a remarkable change. Britain has shown that the world misjudged her apparent lethargy and that Germany's audacious challenge has but served to fire the old fighting blood and to prove to the world that the dauntless spirit of the Viking, and the fearless vigor of the Celt are as alive to-day as ever they were in the brave days of old.

IT NEEDED but the call to arms to work the miracle—and a call not for the purpose of protecting distant possessions or of acquiring new, but to maintain the solemnly pledged word of the nation. Like magic, the men who but yesterday were the "dannelled fools" of a national poet, and were thought to have no interest beyond their own diversion, sprang to their feet, and on the morrow were in the trenches in France, prepared to shed the last drop of their blood for the safety and honor of their native land, in the same spirit as did their sires in the Napoleonic wars of a century ago.

IT HAS been rather rashly concluded that because he tolerated matters that were distasteful to him, rather than deal promptly and energetically with them, the Briton was willing to submit to anything, and was on the down-grade. But let a time come when the honor and the safety of the nation are at stake as in the present juncture, and no time is lost in proving that the old spirit

which has inscribed with glory two thousand years of history almost, instantly and spontaneously displays itself. This, says the Sun, is one of the lessons—one of the most inspiring lessons of the war now raging in the Old World. And not the least significant feature of this testimony is the source from which it comes.

THE MEMORY of that remarkable group of Irish Franciscans who in the seventeenth century shed lustre upon the University of Louvain has been recalled by the destruction of that city by the Germans in the present war. To the special memory of one of them, Father John Colgan, a spacious Parochial Hall and Technical School has just been dedicated at Cardonagh, Donegal, his birth-place. It was Colgan who gave form and permanence to the researches of Father Michael O'Clery, the chief of the Four Masters, and turned the precious Irish manuscripts gathered by the latter at the instigation of Father Hugh Ward, into those imperishable monuments of Irish scholarship, the Trias Thaumaturga, the Acta Sanctuarum and the Life of Duns Scotus. It is fitting that Colgan's memory should be honored in the land of his birth, and it is also well that, in the present crisis, Ireland should not forget that to the valorous little Kingdom of Belgium her priestly sons owed asylum when in their own land the rack and gibbet held sway. It is this thought that lies behind John Redmond's most recent public utterances.

AN INTERESTING episode in the life of the late Archbishop Howley centred in his endeavors to vindicate for his predecessor, Bishop Mulock, the right to the honor of having been the first to suggest the feasibility of an Atlantic cable. To his great learning as a theologian Bishop Mulock added considerable skill in the sciences, and the possibility of transatlantic telegraphic communication occurred to him in the course of his studies. Archbishop Howley unearthed all the evidence available on this point, and made it clear that the contention was well grounded. The honor had, however, been appropriated by others, and Bishop Mulock's title to it has not yet received its just recognition.

DURING THE course of our correspondence with the late Archbishop we forwarded to him a clipping from an old newspaper allotting this distinction to Bishop Mulock's predecessor in the See of St. John's, Most Rev. Michael Fleming. Dr. Howley was much excited over this clipping and made every effort to trace the statement to its source. Unfortunately, however, care had not been taken to note the paper from which the paragraph had been abstracted, or its date, and no effort on the Archbishop's part or on ours succeeded in locating it. The conclusion was finally but very reluctantly arrived at that, as the statement was unsupported by other testimony, it was all a mistake, and that Bishop Mulock it was whom the writer had really in mind. However, that may be, there may be some still living who have knowledge of the subject and can, possibly, so far as Bishop Fleming is concerned, give it some measure of corroboration or denial.

THE CLERICAL EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC HERALD, OF INDIA, IS NEVER AT A LOSS FOR A TOUCH OF HUMOR TO ILLUMINATE HIS OTHERWISE SEDATE COLUMNS. HIS LATEST, WHICH TO US AT LEAST IS NEW, WILL BEAR REPEITION. A NEGRO PREACHER HAD ARRANGED WITH A WHITE BROTHER TO OCCUPY HIS PULPIT FOR ONE SUNDAY, AND THIS IS HOW HE DELIVERED THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO HIS CONGREGATION: "Dis noted divine is one of de greatest men of de age. He knows de unknowable, he kin do de undoable, an' he kin onscrow de unscrutable!"

THE READERS OF ROT

"In condemning the course of infamous papers manufactured for spite, we are very apt to forget, in our indignation," says the Catholic Union and Times, "the pity we owe the duped readers of these salacious sheets. How lamentable that in this enlightened land there are coarse minds that swallow raw every compound of malice and madness that despicable editors desire to serve them. They, indeed, are subjects for pity and prayer. Any true fact of wretched humanity from which a distorted conclusion is drawn, or any distorted fact from which no conclusion flows, are equally acceptable to the poor fools that wallow in sin and have no stomach for truth and logic."

ON THE BATTLE LINE

TURKEY OPENS WAR ON RUSSIA

The great event of the week past was the entrance of Turkey into the war. This is fraught with the gravest possibilities as the Sultan of Turkey is Caliph or spiritual head of all Mohammedans throughout the world. With these the sword is the key of heaven and hell. To die fighting for the Prophet is to be sure of heaven. India, Egypt, Morocco have large Mohammedan populations. Now when the Christian nations are locked in deadly struggle amongst themselves a Jihad or holy war may spread into a terrible conflagration throughout the Moslem world.

London, Oct. 30.—The complications of the European War have been increased by the entrance of the Turkish Empire into the conflict on the side of the Teutonic allies. Following the Breslau's exploit in bombarding Theodosia, Russia, Turkish destroyers have sunk the Russian gunboat Donets in Odessa Harbor and damaged three Russian and one French merchantman.

ANTI-CHRISTIAN FEELING

There have been great manifestations at Damascus, in Asiatic Turkey, in favor of a war against Christian and especially against Great Britain, according to a dispatch to the Exchange Telegraph Company from Athens. The massing of Beoumins along the Egyptian frontier, the dispatch adds, is being continued.

No official declaration of war has yet been made, but Turkey's action seems to make it probable that the area of conflict may be greatly widened and the issues complicated. The Balkans, whence sprang the present European conflict, present such a network of hostile interests that Greece and the other Balkan nations may easily be drawn into the vortex. The Russian ambassador has already been withdrawn from Constantinople and Russian consuls are leaving.

It is thought Greece may declare war against Turkey. The bitter war of the Balkan allies amongst themselves last year following their successful combined attack on Turkey leaves the situation most problematical. It is by no means certain that they will again combine against Turkey. Italy's course seems less clear than ever.

The English papers are confident that the protection of the Suez Canal against a raid and of Egypt against invasion are well provided for. They recognize that the addition of Turkey to the belligerent forces probably will prolong the war and increase its horrors. They say that this means that Great Britain must raise more men.

THE EMDEN AGAIN

The little German cruiser Emden, flying the Japanese flag, slipped into the port of Penang in the Straits Settlements and torpedoed the Russian cruiser Jemchug and a French destroyer that were in the harbor. Both are reported to have been sunk with considerable loss of life.

It is also reported that a first class British battleship has been sunk by a mine. The name of the battleship is not reported. The news is unconfirmed.

IN THE EAST

There is no longer any doubt that the Russians have inflicted a very severe defeat on the Germans in Russian Poland. A Petrograd official communication states:

"We have broken the resistance of the enemy's last units which still attempted to hold on the north of the Piltza. On the front beyond the Viestula all the Austro-German troops are now in retreat. We have occupied Strykow, Ileschow and Nowemiasto. Russian cavalry has entered Radom and captured several automobile convoys.

"In Galicia the situation is unchanged. "On the front in East Prussia the first German corps, supported by other units, during the last four days have made unceasing attacks in the region of Bakalargevo. The enemy's losses are very great."

IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM

The German attempt to reach Dunkirk and Calais has failed. After a terrific struggle in which the naval guns of British and French war ships played an important part, the enemy has been compelled to attempt to break through the allied line farther away from the coast out of range of the guns from the ships.

BOTH SIDES SHOW BRAVERY

Around La Bassée both the allies and the Germans have displayed indomitable bravery in the hand-to-hand fighting which has been going on day and night for weeks. First one side and then the other had taken the offensive. The country is interspersed with thick hedges and ditches, which makes operations difficult, and often those obstacles must be overcome by the troops in the face of a withering fire.

The Globe summary says: The pace is too swift for Hungary and Serbia. It is reported that the Servians, who have gone through three exhausting campaigns since October, 1913, find it no longer possible to continue offensive opera-