

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1914

THE CAUSE OF THE WAR

II. THE SPIRIT OF GERMAN PATRIOTISM

One of the most elementary principles of the new science of scientific history is that historical personages and historical events must be studied in their proper setting. That is to say we must judge the persons, events and movements of the past under the conditions which then obtained. We must project ourselves into the past with all the ideals and principles, religious, philosophical and social, that gave life and purpose and meaning to all that constitutes the history of the time. Notwithstanding the insistence with which this elementary principle (unquestionably valid and vital) is urged, nothing is more common than to judge the persons and events of the past by the radically different conditions which constitute our own environment. Nor is this mistaken attitude confined to our judgment of the past. We fail for similar reasons to understand the peoples of our own day who speak a language, cherish ideals and are influenced by a history other than our own. This world-war comes as an incredible shock, awakening us slowly to the fact that there are such peoples. True, on the watch towers we have had clear-seeing and vigilant watchmen but they never succeeded in more than half awakening us and we soon slept again.

To understand the cause of this war we must understand something of the German mind, of German ideals, of German ambition—something of the soul of Germany. It is hardly necessary to say that the dilettantes of pulpit, platform and press, who distilled to us through their "modern minds" anemic appreciations of German culture, did not quite prepare us for the logical outcome of Germanism.

Within the memory of living men Bismarck, who created and stamped the genius of his personality on the German Empire, attempted to actualize the Reformation principle of State supremacy over the Church. He would mould and fashion the Church of all the ages and all the nations into a State department of Germany. He attempted the impossible. The Goliath met his David in Ludwig Windthorst. England, too, three hundred years ago, and with greater success, ruthlessly crushed the spiritual into temporal state-made moulds. But that was three hundred years ago. Heroic fidelity, heroic endurance and heroic struggle of Catholic and Puritan have finally and irrevocably established the rights of conscience as one of the cherished ideals and principles of English-speaking people throughout the world. Whether or not with world-dominion achieved Bismarck's Empire would, or even could consistently, grant freedom to the Catholic Church we may be permitted to doubt.

The British Islands surrounded by the sea and protected by the fleet are in Europe but not of it in a sense that is true of no other European nation. That narrow strip of sea had enormous influence in history. The island peoples could and did successfully wage the war for freedom of the individual and freedom of the masses of the population from undue State interference and control unhampered by the fear ever-present in continental countries of losing their national liberty. The continental spirit, therefore, in a much larger measure, subordinates the individual to the nation. Continental peoples take kindly to this condition of things. All their historical development and traditions emphasize the necessity of this subordination. All their patriotism glorifies and exalts the State. We may not look in continental Europe

for national heroes like Simon de Montfort, Hampden, Pym or Sir Thomas More. These considerations help us to understand France before, during and after the Revolution, as well as France of to-day.

But it is in modern Germany that this continental spirit finds its highest expression. German patriotism scorns what we value beyond price—individual liberty. It glorifies and exalts and idealizes the Fatherland until the individual is lost in the nation; the rights of man and the claims of humanity are merged into and absorbed by the mighty civilizing mission of Germany and the Germans.

The German Emperor in a speech at Konigsberg, Aug. 27th, 1910, said: "They (German women) must impress upon their children's children that to day the principal thing is not to live one's own life at the expense of others, not to attain one's end at the cost of the Fatherland, but solely and alone to keep the Fatherland before one's eyes, solely and alone to stake all the powers of mind and body upon the good of the Fatherland."

We men must cultivate all the military virtues. Such language in the mouth of any English-speaking statesman the world over would be looked upon as hysterical. If treated at all serious by the unanimous answer would be that the State is made for man not man for the State. It is subversive of our very ideal of the State. Perhaps the most effective barrier to the extreme Socialist propaganda in these countries is the instinctive feeling that even if the Socialist State were to accomplish what it claims to be able to do there would be an enormous curtailment of personal liberty. In Germany Socialism finds the most favorable environment for development. It is there the logical remedy for the poverty and misery arising out of the present unequal and inequitable distribution of wealth.

In the passage above quoted the Kaiser expresses the German ideal; he is not hysterical, he does not exaggerate; he voices the most intimate convictions and highest aspirations of Germany's patriotic soul.

NOT MADE IN GERMANY

The scholarly W. H. K. in the Tablet enters a temperate protest against the socialist superstition that not only is modern scholarship monopolized by Germany but that several modern sciences owe their origin to Germans. While giving due credit to the patient research and solid accomplishment of German scholars he warns us against the extremes of "loathing and alarm" and servile adulation. "We have a type of this (latter) fashion in Will Ladislav's contemptuous criticism of the pedantic English scholar and his old-fashioned ways. It is no use, he insists, to grope about in the woods with a pocket-compass when the Germans have made good roads. And it was about the same time that Matthew Arnold spoke of a certain Saturday reviewer 'who saw all things in Teutonism, as Malebranche saw all things in God.'"

Speaking of historical criticism in particular Father Kent says: "It really seems as if some people who venture to compare German historical and critical work with that of other nations have confined their attention to the German literature alone. If they had gone further afield and considered the history of this branch of studies during the last three hundred years, let us say, they would find that what they justly admire in the writings of modern German scholars and historians is neither so very new nor so very German as they are apt to imagine.

"The odd thing is that the idea of the solidarity of European thought and history is one of the chief lessons that may be learnt from some of the chief German thinkers. And what they say, more especially of philosophy is certainly true of historical scholarship and criticism. The discerning student who turns the pages of a German critic or historian will feel that his gratitude is due to many others besides the immediate author of the book before him. He owes something, to be sure, to the ardent scholars of the Renaissance, to the bold, far-reaching criticism of Joseph Scaliger, and to the patient industry of French Benedictines."

Now we had just been reading something of the history of history and we were struck with the modesty of Father Kent's claims for the place that rightfully belongs to the Benedictines in the development of critical history or historical criticism which so many would have us believe is the creation of modern German scholars. There are scholarly non-Catholics who will at once concede W. H. K.'s point. But there are "hordes of barbarians" not all Germans who would take his position

by storm. It may not be out of place to bring up reinforcements. James Thomson Shotwell, Ph. D., Professor of History in Columbia University, N. Y., has this to say which is very much to the point:

"The father of modern French History or at least of historical research, was André Duchesne (1584-1640), whose splendid collections of sources are still in use. Jean Bodin wrote the first treatise on scientific history (*Methodus ad faciendam historiarum cognitionem*, 1660), but he did not apply his own principles of criticism; and it was left for the Benedictine monks of the Congregation of St. Maur to establish definitely the new science. The place of this school in the history of history is absolutely without a parallel. Few of those in the audiences of Mollere, returning home under the grey walls of St. Germain-des-Près, knew that within that monastery the men whose midnight they disturbed were laying the basis for all scientific history; and few of the later historians of that age have been wiser. But when Luc d'Achery turned from exegetics to patristics and the lives of the saints, as a sort of way to that vast work of collection and comparison of texts which developed through Mabillon, Montfaucon, Ruinart, Martene, Bouquet and their associates, into the indispensable implements of modern historians."

Professor Shotwell is not a Catholic. Whether or not the man who writes "revelation no longer appeals to scientific minds as a source of knowledge" is a Christian we cannot say. Perhaps he is merely stating an historic fact. But that is not surprising. In rewriting history according to the scientific method Protestants and agnostics have done much to shatter the Protestant tradition based on the rhetoric that has so long passed for history.

The German myth fares no better. As Father Kent pointedly and pithily tells the worshippers at the shrine of German culture: "The odd thing is that the idea of the solidarity of European thought and history is one of the chief lessons that may be learnt from some of the chief German thinkers."

Minerva may have come from the head of Jupiter, but neither critical history nor any other modern science has sprung full-blown from the minds of modern German scholars.

THE SPIRITUAL SIDE OF EDUCATION

Continuing, Mr. Knox stated that he was sorry to say the spiritual side has been sadly neglected. "The schools of the past have grievously erred in laying too much stress on the intellectual and neglecting the spiritual elements."

The foregoing is from the Free Press summary of the Rev. W. J. Knox's address to the East Middlesex Teachers' Association on "The Social Function of Education." It is gratifying to note this additional evidence that observant and thinking Protestants are not far from agreement with Catholics as to the inadequacy and incompleteness of education without religion. We do not wish to strain what the Rev. Mr. Knox says, nor do we at all care to score a useless point against the public schools. The speaker would hardly advocate the Catholic solution, as it seems impracticable for non-Catholics. Nevertheless, the growing sense of the inadequacy of purely secular education in the schools to which men like Mr. Knox give expression strengthens the case for separate schools. Broadly speaking, however, the separate school is possible only in urban centres of population. Fully one third of our children in this province attend public schools; doubtless a still larger proportion in other parts of Canada.

To class our public schools with the positively anti-Christian, indeed frankly atheistic, state schools of France is to commit a serious offence against justice and truth. The Catholic objection to them is that they do not provide sufficiently for the teaching of definite religious truth which we believe is the basis of all spiritual culture. They do make some provision for such teaching. Against the recently notorious but now forgotten Nathan the Catholic women of Rome carried on a successful fight for the restoration of the right to have religious instruction given an hour a week in the capital of Christendom. That right is freely accorded to every clergyman or his appointee in Ontario. But Catholics would have something more; they would have the whole atmosphere of the school permeated by religion.

Mr. Bird S. Coler, former Comptroller of New York City, who once viewed the Catholic parochial school with distrust and suspicion was led to study the question in the concrete. His work "Two and Two Make Four"

is a masterpiece. He was a Methodist and he remains a Methodist; yet he had the courage of his convictions and gives in the work just mentioned the results of his study of the school question.

A recent lecture shows that he still possesses these convictions and the courage to express them. In this lecture he said:

"The trouble with our public school system, is that we have eliminated the essentials that make for character building. I think that in the parochial school system your Church has found the coefficient in public education."

"In these later years it has been my pleasure to study your parochial school system. I have found therein the saving principle which has been eliminated from the public school system. I found a secular education which in every recent test has shown superior efficiency over the public school education. I have found the idea of personal responsibility to God being pressed home upon the mind of the youth. I know of no other way of making good citizens. I do not believe there is any other way. Therefore, I can say, although I am not of your Church, that in its parochial school system you have built an institution that makes for the conservation of the American ideal of life and government."

"The evil against which that system is a protest has now general recognition. There is no educator of note in our country who doesn't recognize the lamentable weakness of the public school as a moral agent. The idea that secular education is sufficient, that teaching a man what there is to be known about the material side of life will enable him to meet and overcome moral dangers, has been exploded long ago. We know now that this kind of education is productive merely of criminals more dangerous than ignorant criminals; that it interposes no bar against dishonesty; that it gives life and form to no conception of justice; in short, that it has no cultural, moral value."

"Look wherever I will at any problem of health or politics or morals, I can find the solution only in those simple precepts of religion which were taught ages ago and which have never lost and never can lose their compelling force, because they are predicated upon eternal truth."

"These simple precepts you teach in your parochial school. These things, which are the most important things, which are neither of yesterday, nor to-day, nor to-morrow, but of all times, you give the place of importance in your educational scheme. In so doing you balance your system and you give to the American nation citizens who have a living faith, who have a clear and definite sense of their obligations as moral beings, who know their duty to their fellow-man, their country and their God. Of such as these an efficient citizenship is constituted."

"If education," says the Rev. Mr. Knox, "fails to relate the child to its surroundings it fails lamentably." "I have found the idea of personal responsibility to God being pressed home upon the mind of youth," says Mr. Coler and he adds: "I know of no other way of making good citizens." The Catholic Church has vast treasures of experience such as impels both gentlemen to point out where the public school falls short in things a Christian must consider essential. And she knows no other way to cultivate the spiritual side of human nature or to uphold moral character than to have the whole atmosphere of school life pervaded by religion.

AN IRISH AMERICAN ON THE WAR

Dr. James J. Walsh was with us again last week. President White of the Canadian Club expressed the hope, endorsed by everybody, that we may be able to call it "Dr. Walsh's annual visit."

The Irish American is a more or less unknown species of the genus homo to many Canadians. With all minds full of the war it was a happy inspiration of the Doctor's to preface his address on Education before the Canadian Club with a reference to the all-absorbing subject. Its application to the modern conception of education and its power to influence mankind is obvious; but it is safe to say that the more immediate interest centered in the fact that we were listening to an Irish American's view of the great world struggle.

It was a perceptible relief to find that, like an Irish friend of his in New York, he was neutral; it made no difference to him whether it was the Belgians, the Russians, the French or the British that won. The statement that if Canada became a German province to-day the United States would be a German province was greeted with some applause, but with somewhat more pronounced incredulous laughter. Dr. Walsh left no room for doubt as to his meaning; he was not joking.

The plea that this is a Teuton war of self defence against the Slav does not impress Dr. Walsh. "I studied in Germany; my old master Virchow was not a Teuton but a Slav; Treitczke is a Slav name; so is Nietzsche; likewise Von Bulow. Eastern Prussia is so predominantly Slav that the German officials never allow the statistics as to racial origin to enter the published Census reports. Belgium is Teutonic; Northern France is largely Teutonic; perhaps the population of England has a more important Teutonic element than that of Prussia." These statements are interesting taken in connection with G. K. Chesterton's article which we publish elsewhere in this issue.

That science owes so much to Germany is a popular belief to which the lecturer could not subscribe. "We do owe to Germany the magnificent organization of detail; we owe much to the patient industry of German talent; for the advances beyond the borderland of what was hitherto unknown we owe much more to the genius of other nations."

Perhaps even more than as an Irish American Dr. Walsh's view of the situation was interesting as one of the editors of the New York Herald. As one who sat two or three times a week at the editorial board of this great American journal, where a score of typical Americans interchange opinions one felt that Dr. Walsh reflected in a very special way educated and popular American sentiment.

To a query in a private interview he assured us that the anti-British Irishman represented at present an infinitesimal and altogether negligible proportion of the Irish in America.

Needless to say the Doctor's lectures, of which he delivered four, were a delight to his audiences. The versatility of the man, the depth and wide range of his reading in matters where he has come to be a recognized authority, and the charm of his scholarly personality made his day in London really what Chancellor McKeon in ecclesiastical terms called it—a first class feast.

MONSIGNOR BENSON

God's ways are surely inscrutable and incomprehensible. Which of us that followed the wonderful career of Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson but prophesied for him long years of fruitful labor for the cause of Truth. His was a life of extraordinary promise, and yet it has seemed good to Almighty God to call him to Himself in the full prime of life and the blossoming of his talents. In our prayers for the eternal repose of his gentle soul there is mingled a note of regret for what seems to us his untimely end, but He who orders all things wisely and well so decreed it, and so, without asking the reason why, we bow in humble submission to His will.

Born in 1871, the fourth son of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of the Anglican Church, Robert Hugh Benson, after exercising Anglican orders, was received into the Catholic Church, in 1903, and in the following year was ordained to the holy priesthood in Rome. How he came to recognise the claims of what his father lightly named "the Italian Mission" is best told in his own words: "The truth first began to dawn on me some years ago when I was travelling down the Nile in Egypt. At one place where we stopped I discovered that the Catholic Church was located not in the middle of the city, not near the palaces, where it would have been the 'patronage' of the fashionable, but in a section where the poor Arabs lived in mud-huts. Here was a priest giving to these people the same message that was given to the members of the Roman communion in the most stately cathedrals of the world. The thought broke in upon me, I think for the first time, that that religion must be the true religion of Christ, for He had come that His message might reach all." His father's exalted position in the Established Church invested young Benson's conversion with peculiar and dramatic interest. But apart altogether from the accident of birth, Benson's burning zeal and his untiring devotion to the service of the Church, stamped him at once as a resolute champion of the Old Faith. His energy was inexhaustible. Preaching, lecturing, writing, he sowed the good seed up and down throughout England, and found time for an occasional visit to America, where he won new distinctions for himself and new honors for the Faith. The achievements of that

wonderful decade gave certain promise of great things in the years that seemed assured to him. But it was not to be thus. His work was done. A busy life has seen its close: a great figure in English Catholic life has passed for ever from the scene, but the inspiration of his work still lives and will continue to bear fruit long after the generous heart and the fertile brain of Robert Hugh Benson have crumbled into dust.

Monsignor Benson is best known as the author of a long list of remarkable books. Like his brothers, A. C. Benson and E. F. Benson, he had a ready pen at his command, which was also a pen of suggestive power. The mere enumeration of his published volumes vividly illustrates his remarkable fecundity and his tireless passion for work. The book of the "Love of Jesus," "Christ in the Church," "City set on a Hill," "Ecclesia," "The Church of Christ," "Non-Catholic Denominations," "Religion of a Plain Man," "Mysticism," "St. Thomas of Canterbury," "Friendship of Christ," "By What Authority," "Conventionalists," "Cost of a Crown," "Coward," "Dawn of All," "History of Richard Raynall," "The King's Achievement," "The Light Invisible," "Lord of the World," "Mirror of Shalott," "Nativity Mystery Play," "Necromancers," "None other Gods," "Papers of a Parish," "The Queen's Tragedy," "The Sentimentalists," "A Winningway," "Alphabet of the Saints," "Come Rack, Come Rope," "Confessions of a Convert," "An Average Man," and "Initiation," are some of the products of his busy pen. It seems almost impossible that such a diversified and lengthy list could be the output of such a brief literary career, and it is all the more remarkable when we bear in mind that writing was only one field of his activity. The speed at which his books were produced militated against mastery of language, but if they lack somewhat of style they are brimful of human interest. Benson did not aim at correctness of diction. He wrote for a purpose. His books were missionary, and with the missionary earnestness is more potent than eloquence. If, when he preached in London, members of every communion flocked to hear him, yet it was through his books that he reached his largest audience. Through them he preached to a world audience, and many a one who would never dream of going to church to hear a sermon, and many another who would resent any attempt to place the claims of the Catholic Church before them, read Benson and, all unconsciously, had the sermon and the apologia preached to them. And yet Benson was never "preachy" thus illustrating the fact that the novel, so ill-used to-day, may be made to serve a very lofty purpose without being sentimentally "goody-goody." Woven round a very prosaic dogma the reader finds a delicious story which presents the staid old doctrine forcibly, and yet so that he who runs may read. We shall not attempt to decide which of his numerous literary progeny is his master piece. "By What Authority," "The King's Achievement" and "The Sentimentalists" all have their champions, but for ourselves we confess that we admire most his soul-stirring "Come Rack? Come Rope," which has been well described as an epic of the English martyrs. The Catholic who could read it and withstand the temptation to fall on his knees and thank God that he, too, belonged to the old Faith, is made of very unresponsive matter indeed. In the passing of Monsignor Benson a brilliant star has fallen from the firmament of Catholic letters. But that it is only to shine with greater brilliancy in the firmament of heaven shall be our heartfelt prayer. Peace to his ashes.

COLUMBA.

work of the kind produced elsewhere on this Continent. It stamped its author as an ecclesiastical historian of wide knowledge and discrimination, who also possessed, in no insignificant degree, the art of literary expression.

IT IS NOT here our intention of sketching the life of Archbishop Howley, or of describing his work as the head of the Church in the Island Province. That can better be done by those who were his co-laborers in the ministry and in possession therefore of intimate knowledge of his merits as priest, Prefect Apostolic of the fishermen of the West Coast, and Archbishop of St. John's. Personally, we knew him chiefly as man of letters and historical investigator, who from his early years was always on the alert to gather information, and who, to use his own words, grasped every opportunity of elucidating a knotty point or of uncovering the self-sacrificing labors of the pioneers of the Faith in Newfoundland. "Everything bearing upon the past history of the country," he said, "every anecdote of the olden time; every scrap of manuscript; every inscription or epitaph having the slightest pretension to antiquity; every vestige of the former occupation of Newfoundland, whether civil, military, or ecclesiastical—in a word, everything with the shadow of a claim to archaeological distinction was immediately transferred to the notebook or sketch-book, with a view to being at some future day presented to the public." This proclaims the true instinct of the historical craftsman, not the shallow deliverances of the hack, who, in perpetrating a book to order, inevitably betrays in every line that the subject has been read-up for the occasion.

THERE ARE some incidents however in Archbishop Howley's life which, as leading up to the literary part of his later career, we cannot forbear mentioning. He was, like so many of the Maritime clergy, educated at the Propaganda, a fact which, putting him as it did, in touch with the fountain-heads of ecclesiastical learning and with churchmen and scholars from every country in the world, fostered and developed that largeness of mind and breadth of sympathy which marked his subsequent career as priest and prelate in his Island home.

SHORTLY AFTER his ordination in Rome in 1868, he was chosen (in 1869) by the Sacred Congregation to go to Scotland as Secretary to Right Rev. Mgr. Eyre, the newly-appointed Vicar Apostolic of the Western District. The latter, who, upon the restoration of the Scottish Hierarchy in 1878 became Archbishop of Glasgow, was himself an archaeologist of distinction and we may be sure that Dr. Howley's association with him tended greatly to increase his own ardor in that direction. On the opening of the Vatican Council in 1870, Father Howley accompanied Mgr. Eyre to Rome, and it was on that occasion that he received his Doctor's degree, *honoris causa*, from the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda, he having been obliged to leave Rome on the Scottish mission in the midst of his preparation for that distinction.

WE FEEL that under the circumstances no apology is necessary to our readers for devoting several paragraphs to the valuable History of the Church in Newfoundland which constitutes the late Archbishop's chief claim to distinction as an historian. It was published as far back as 1888, and has not, we believe, been republished. In this interesting volume, Dr. Howley surveys the whole history of the Island, giving special attention to its first discovery, and to its settlements under John Guy and Sir George Calvert (afterwards Lord Baltimore). Neither of these were destined to be permanent. Governor Guy, disheartened after two years, retired after two years and the rights of his Company subsequently passed into the hands of Sir George Calvert. The latter's attempt at colonization, though full of promise and pursued while it lasted with great energy and ability, was later transferred to the more equable soil of Maryland with results which all the world knows, and which have perpetuated the Founder's name in one of the leading cities of the United States.

PASSING OVER the intervening period we come to the first permanent establishment of the Catholic Church in Newfoundland. In 1689, Mgr. de St. Vallier, second Bishop of

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