

## Humility and Some Scientists

The *Catholic Herald of India* is of opinion that though scientists as a class are endowed with notable qualities, humility is not one of them. It goes on to say on that account all the more remarkable was Dr. O. Forster's presidential address at the Twelfth Indian Science Congress recently held in Benares. As one of the themes of his allocution, the President chose Benjamin Franklin's words: "In reality there is perhaps no one of our natural passions so hard to subdue as pride . . . for, even if I could conceive that I had completely overcome it, I should probably be proud of my humility." Dr. Forster has very nearly reason to be proud of his. "All that we ask," he said, "and we ask it for the benefit of our fellows and our successors more than for our own advantage, is that a balanced view may be taken of knowledge in its various branches." The President unconsciously defined humility in all scientific knowledge: it is a balanced view; the expert's consciousness that he is expert in only one branch of knowledge. And he gave a practical test that his conviction was as good as his words by saying: "True religion has a really splendid ally in modern science: if required to define the minimum religious equipment for a boy or girl I should suggest, in all reverence, the Ten Commandments and a microscope." "Presidents in the past have not always been so humble," the *Herald* continues, "but it has happened that they were much more cocky on the presidential platform than in their own laboratory. We remember a good Indian scientist, who was President of the Scientific Congress and had uttered most abominable materialistic stuff on taboo, magic, and the origin of religion. Meeting him shortly after, the present writer told him: 'My dear Mr. So-and-So, what rubbish you have been talking at that scientific conclave. Surely, you don't believe a word of what you said.' His reply was quite candid: 'Of course you know I don't, but that's the sort of stuff they want; it's the fashion.'"

## Trouble in Colorado

The *Denver Catholic Register* tells of an attempt on the part of the Ku Klux Klan Governor of Colorado to suppress the Mass by forcing the discontinuance of the use of sacramental wine. Let the *Register* tell the story in its own words:—

"Governor Charles Morley of Colorado, who was elected by the aid of the Ku Klux Klan, paid part of his debt to that organisation in his inaugural address by attacking the use of altar wine. He suggested that the State eliminate from the Prohibition Law the right to obtain, possess, or dispense intoxicating liquor for sacramental purposes. 'Experience shows that this exception is too often flagrantly abused.'

"There has never been abuse of this portion of the Prohibition Law from Catholic sources. There have been one or two Jewish cases, but they have been properly handled.

"Governor Morley or anybody else who thinks he is going to abolish the Catholic Mass has another guess coming. This has been tried time after time. In Great Britain there have been times when to celebrate Mass was a felony punishable by death. The

same has been true in other lands. In Ireland, under British rule, the people were forced at times to steal off into the wilds to surround a priest who said Mass while he lay on his back with the chalice on his breast. Every place where fanaticism has held sway the Mass has been under fire. But it is celebrated, and it will be celebrated until Judgment Day. Furthermore, it is going to be celebrated right here in Colorado, without intermission. The Catholic religion is not going to be banished, and the Mass is the centre of our worship. If every priest and Catholic layman in the State has to go to gaol we will celebrate the Mass. It is altogether outside the jurisdiction of the State of Colorado or any civil government to dictate to us on such a spiritual matter as the Mass. This is our stand, and let our enemies make the most of it. When they step inside the sanctuary itself they will find every one of us ready to go to death rather than submit.

"We are going to use fermented wine for the Mass because Christ used it. It does not matter how many laws they pass forbidding it, we will get it and use it. We pride ourselves on our loyalty to the nation, commonwealth, and community, but when they enact laws contrary to the law of God, we say with Peter and the Apostles: 'We ought to obey God rather than man!'

"So lay off, Governor Morley. You are dealing here with something that will bring the curse of Almighty God on you if you dare push forward your fanaticism."

## Secret Diplomacy

Somebody said that the lessons of experience were vastly over-rated since so very few learned anything from them. When the Great War was drawing to a close, the men who knew the means by which the catastrophe had been brought about began to make disclosures which caused the world to sit up and take notice—at least for a while. Little by little the sordid story of intrigue which had been hidden in a mist of falsehood was pieced together until it became a complete figure called Secret Diplomacy. "Week after week, for the health of its soul," wrote the *New York Nation*, "the world is forced to hold its nose and inspect at close range the foetid and septic processes of diplomacy." But the world learned little from it all. When the politicians were brought face to face with their perfidy they acted in that brazen manner which they have made their own, denying in one breath what they admitted in the next. One moment they denied the intrigues indignantly, and in the next they produced the secret treaties as reasons why they could not adhere to President Wilson's Fourteen Points, to which they had previously agreed. Then, when the war ended they set to work conspiring again, with the result that they nearly brought about another war with Turkey. When Ramsay MacDonald became Prime Minister of Britain the atmosphere in diplomatic circles was rendered decidedly fresher than it had ever been within living memory. But now, according to an English exchange, the old methods are being employed once more and no one seems to trouble. Secret diplomacy must lead straight

to war. As long as it obtains no nation can feel safe because no nation can say precisely what plots are being hatched against it. Whilst Ministerial communications are couched in the friendliest of terms, it knows that underneath all there is the plot and counter-plot, the army of spies and diplomats burrowing through its very foundations. If a traveller were passing through a country inhabited by cannibals he would not run any risk of being taken off his guard: he would shoot at sight. In like manner, feeling that they cannot trust one another, nations often are driven into war by sheer panic. "Mr. Baldwin," says our contemporary, "is merely a figurehead on the Tory barque; his face points in any direction willed by the Talleyrands and Metternichs in duodecimo whose hands move the Tory wheel." What a tragedy it is!

## The Craze for Laws

It is a bad sign when a government starts out on a campaign of indiscriminate law-making. The State is the guardian of rights, not the giver of them; and when it oversteps its functions in this respect, and begins to load its Statute Books with all kinds of unnecessary regulations at the behest of cranks, who are listened to only because they have votes to bestow, it becomes what Artemus Ward would term "an emfatik noosance." All the English-speaking countries suffer more or less from this form of intemperance, which springs from the erroneous idea that Parliamentarians are the blind servants of the people rather than properly constituted rulers chosen by the people in order that they might use their judgment in the direction of affairs in accordance with the dictates of their conscience. Senator Beveridge, speaking of America, said: "The Nation and every State are well nigh smothered with laws." He said that thirty State legislatures and Congress were in session, and all the mills were grinding furiously. At the end of the session they would have thousands of new laws, of which only a few were really necessary. "No human being knows," he said, "what these innumerable laws mean. No human being knows even how many statutes are hidden within the forbidding covers of the thousands of volumes that contain Acts of Congress and of Legislatures. No human being knows the sum of rules and regulations that unceasingly pour from our countless bureaus, boards, commissions, and departments of Government, every one of which bureaucratic edicts has the force and effect of enactments by legislative bodies. How can any one obey every law, when nobody knows or can know, how many laws there are or what they command or forbid." *America* says that one result of this debauch of excessive law-making is that one in every eleven American citizens is an official charged to make, interpret, or enforce the law. Or to put the case in other words, every ten American citizens must reach down into their pockets to pay the salary of the eleventh. If this goes on, America will soon be in the position of those amiable old ladies who supported their respective families by taking over one another's laundry and housework.