



Barquilla de la Santa María

BULLETIN of the Catholic Record Society-
Diocese of Columbus

Volume XXX, No. 6

June, A.D. 2005

History—Why and How it should be Studied

By Rev. Sylvester H. Rosecrans, later First Bishop of Columbus
(Part 1 of 2)

This address was delivered to the Students of St. Joseph's College near Somerset by Rev. S. H. Rosecrans, then a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, on July 4, 1855. It has been transcribed from the pages of the Catholic Telegraph of August 11, 1855. The persecution of the Church of which he speaks was that of the Know-Nothings, who in 1854 and 1855 were at the height of their strength.

Young Gentlemen of St. Joseph's.

In accepting the invitation to address you, kindly extended to me by your respected superiors, my only regret has been that neither my time nor my talents have permitted me to prepare such an elaborate and finished discourse as would comport with the annual celebration of a classical institution. I have been compelled to write out hastily, a few observations which I hope may prove useful to you, on the importance of the study of history, and on the right manner of conducting it.

It is generally conceded, at the present time, that the study of history is very useful, indeed, indispensable, to the scholar. We have an abundance of books called Histories; and in almost every institution of learning they are among the text books. Still, I do not think, that, as a general thing, those who commend the study of history, are adequately aware of its importance, or know precisely for what reason it is so useful.

Before explaining what I consider to be the reason why history is of such importance, permit me to warn



Rev. Sylvester H. Rosecrans
(Courtesy of St. Joseph Cathedral)

you young gentlemen, not to think, I mean that you ought to drop other studies of your college course and betake yourselves to study it. When I say history is important to the scholar, I mean to the finished scholar, and not to the beginner. Your classical and scientific course, is the alphabet of learning; Mathematics, Greek, Latin, Logic, Rhetoric, open the mind and school it to habits of thought, and prepare it for the study of history, philosophy and the professions. It would be as absurd in you to aspire to an accurate knowledge of history, without first mastering your college course, as it would be for a

child who has not yet learned his letters, to practice only in reading lessons.

I. To be able to appreciate the importance of history you must call to mind that all knowledge is valuable not precisely in itself, but in so far as it is a guide and aid to right action. Our end, at least in the present life, is not so much to know as it is to do. Knowledge is not for its own sake, but for the sake of action—it is not our end, but the light shining over the path we must traverse to obtain our end.

Now, although your studies of languages, mathematics, logic, &c., accustoming you as they do, to judge correctly, have a remote bearing on action, the knowledge of history is the only one that has immediate application to actual life. Other studies give habits of reasoning, and general data, whence we can deduce practical conclusions. History, setting before us what others have done, in similar circumstances, and with what success, furnishes us a judgment ready formed of what we ought to do.

The reason of this is, that despite the wild doctrine of progress, there are no circumstances in which we may be placed, no act we may be called upon to perform, no judgment we will have to pronounce, for which we may not find some precedent in the past.

The field of our labors is no untrodden field. The sentence of the wise man, “there is nothing new under the sun,” applies to us, and our times, as to all times. What is happening now has happened before, and will happen again.

In this, the material is the image and likeness of the moral world.

The earth goes rolling round and round the circuit of its orbit, and the same unvarying succession of winter and ice, spring and flowers, summer and heat, autumn and fruits, is kept up year after year and century after century. The tides though ever ebbing and flowing, yet ever remain, within the limits of an unalterable law. The moon, taken by poets as a symbol of inconstancy, is yet constant in her never ending cycle of changes. Even those wayward and mysterious bodies, so long a terror to the nations, — comets, have been discovered to go and come in stated and unvarying periods. Thus the almost boundless variety of motion and appearance in matter, is woven together with a chain of harmony and unity, though sometimes lost to our eyes, forgotten, perhaps, does

not cease to exist in multiplicity.

So in the moral world, in the world of human thought and action, of science and art, government and trade, there are appointed cycles, in which all the events that transpire forever run.

It has been said by a poet—that the course of time from the creation to the end is marked by a long procession of our race, ever rushing on, ever full—some springing up from the cradle, to fill the gap in the ranks, made by others dropping off into the grave.

But this procession, if so we conceive the succession of the generations, is not one that moves in a right line, from point to point, ever breaking untrodden ground, and penetrating into virgin forests, but one that goes round and round a weary endless circle. As the earth through which the children thread their life-way, is dotted white with the monumental stones, and the ground they till is rich with the mouldered bodies of their fathers, so, in the world of thought do they go over the same field their fathers traversed, so do they but cherish again the aspirations, thrill with the loves, pine with the cares, sink under the disappointments of generations past. There is nothing new under the sun.

Leave out of the history of the world the Incarnation of the Son of God, with its antecedents and consequences, and there is nothing left but a repetition of substantially the same facts, with different names, times and places.

The history of every nation is the account of its rise by war, conquest, policy, treachery, its growth by tribute and trade, its decline through effeminacy and corruption, its fall by external invasion and subjugation. The history of science and arts, points out an era of peace, a great master who taught, and disciples who gathered round him, refinement of the people, ending in effeminacy, the upheaving of the existing order, and a return of barbarism

The biography of individuals, records their birth, growth, loves, hatreds, plans, hopes, disappointments, death, and end.

These are general formulae which might be called, in mathematical language, the equation of the circle of political, scientific and personal events.

It was a foolish attempt made by certain German writers, in accordance with the theory of progress, to find some great fact that might serve, as it were, to bind together all the other facts of history, and show the meaning of that strange medley of rising and falling empires, of ever shifting civilization, of war and peace, of arts and barbarism, it exhibits, and the good to which they have been constantly tending. The attempt was foolish, I said, because no such fact exists. The events of this world find, as their complement, so their explanation, only in eternity. The Cross of Christ is the first principle of the philosophy of history. Mount Calvary is the only point high enough to overlook the entire moral world, and looking out from there upon the generations, we behold them, age after age, running round and round the same petty circle of cupidity, ambition, pride, pleasure and vanity, not learning one jot of wisdom from their father's experience, nor advancing one step in any substantial excellence.

Nor is the doctrine of progress, in the sense of those writers, sustained by the instance of modern inventions and improvements and you will find that they are nothing more than, as Macaulay says, admiringly, so many means of promoting "human" (i.e. bodily) comfort. "The Baconian philosophy" says the Scotch Reviewer, "is the philosophy of comfort."

Now, the desire of bodily comfort existed in the world in every age, and that ours is more ingenious in promoting it, because more eager in desiring it does not prove any real progress in true excellence. Indeed I am not sure that so much care bestowed on inventions of that kind is not a proof of a lower tone in our age than in former times. The great men of antiquity would fall much in our estimation if their names had not been lost in forgetfulness, did we know them to have been engrossed in the pursuits that we so honor in those of our own day.

Thus, for example, Aristotle would be much less honored if instead of grappling with the great personal, social and political mysteries that to the eye of the pagan surround humanity, he had employed his mighty genius in studying out improved cultivators, and low pressure steam engines; and Plato would cease to command our admiration, as Plato, if instead of reasoning on the origin, nature, and destiny of the human soul, he had spent his life in inventing revolving rifles and patent baby jumpers. We may

multiply means of bodily enjoyment ad infinitum, if we please, we never get out of the old circle in which their cupidities and passions kept our fathers moving. The sentence of inspiration is verified by history, there is nothing new under the sun.

Now if such be the case—if the present is only a repetition of the past, the truth of what I said in the beginning, that history furnishes us judgments ready formed on practical matters is manifest.

Whatever be our career in life we must encounter a thousand times perplexing circumstances; and if to unravel our perplexities, we were left to grope in the twilight of theory, we might commit a hundred blunders for each one of our thousand perplexities. But with the light of experience we can proceed readily, calmly, unerringly through them all.

In illustration of this point I might adduce a thousand instances of gross blunders committed by those who had no history to guide them, but I will content myself with referring to but one or two.

1. The first example is of the blunder of a great party of men, in our own times—of those namely who imagine that there is something in the Catholic Church hostile to liberty.

The Catholic Church is a great fact of history. Her records are more copious and more open to the world than those of any other institution existing.

Those records beginning from the time of Christ and his apostles, uniformly declare, that she brought into the world the two great doctrines of republicanism, that of the equality of men and the personal independence of each from the arbitrary control of the others, that she caused these doctrines to prevail, in public sentiment, over the teachings of Aristotle, the prejudices of the vulgar—the interests of the powerful, —that she defended them by her martyrs against the tyranny of pagans, by the heroism of her Popes and religious orders, against unprincipled monarchs and savage feudal lords; in the middle ages, —until at last slavery was spontaneously abolished in Christendom, and responsibility of rulers to God and justice every where acknowledged.

This is the historical fact.

Now, in ignorance of this fact, you behold a multitude of men rise up, in this free country, and

demand proscription of the Catholic church in the name of that liberty and equality—of that liberty and equality which she brought into the world, which she caused to prevail over the colossal power of the Roman Empire, over the haughty sovereigns and slave owners of feudal times—which she defended against open violence and secret craft, while the forefathers, in sentiment, of those demagogues who now accuse her before the people, were fawning at the feet of Kings, and warning them against the democratic tendencies of Catholic doctrines!

This gross blunder of a large party, this crying injustice to faithful citizens of this republic owes its origin almost entirely to ignorance of history.

2. Another error that owes its prevalence to ignorance of history is the exaggerated idea our people have of progress.

The truth is, you know, that our progress has been all in the material order; but men, ignorant of its history, imagine that it has been also in the order of

thought, philosophy, and true civilization. Hence the senseless sneers bestowed upon the apostolic times, and worse than senseless flippancy with which some refuse to believe God because he spoke to a past, and, to them, rude and uncultivated age!

3. So again observe the enthusiasm, with which men of our times seize upon theories and projects of reform. Now if they knew history, if they had watched the weary struggle of the men of ages past to make a paradise of earth, and witnessed their humiliating failures, they would turn with contempt from their shallow delusions, and scorn to enter the unprofitable career in which so many have encountered invariable disappointment before them. I might, in this way, continue until night to adduce instances of delusions, errors, and absurdities, which never could have had any existence, but for ignorance of history, but I hasten to discuss briefly the second point I have proposed, viz: the right manner of studying history.

(To be concluded)



St. Joseph Cemetery, Priory, and College Based on an engraving by "Grosvenor," published in the college newspaper *The Collegian*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (April, 1855). Original courtesy of the Archives, St. Mary of the Springs.

Calvary Cemetery, West Jefferson, Madison County, Ohio

Concluded from Volume XXX, No. 5

- 1928, [date blank] in St. Anthony Hospital, Columbus, John O'Neil, born on the Atlantic Ocean, age 79
- 1930, May 13, Jennie G. Delaney, born W. Jefferson, age 56, cancer
- 1933, Apr. 4, John Flanagan, born Springfield, O., age 73 (born Aug. 9, 1859), cancer, parents Edward Flanagan and Rose Kernan
- 1934, Mar. 28, Mrs. Mary McElroy, born Union Co., Ohio, July 20, 1871, age 63, heart attack; parents Dennis Creedon and Mary Sullivan, husband Patrick McElroy
- 1934, Dec. 14, Luke Frey, born Madison Co., O. on Dec. 11, 1868, age 66, pneumonia; parents Peter J. Frey and Ann B. Schilling
- 1935, Jan. 12, Mrs. Georgianna Frey, born Aug. 5, 1898 in Newport, Ky., age 36, heart trouble; husband John Frey; parents James Turner and Elizabeth Reeb
- 1935, Aug. 14, Alice Bernice Frey, born Nov. 2, 1934 in W. Jefferson, age 8 months, pneumonia; parents Jacob Frey and Ruth M. Price
- 1935, Sept. 12, William Schellhaas, born May 25 in Kaiserloder, Germany, age 72, parents Adam and Anna Schellhaas; wife Rose Grom
- 1936, Nov. 20 at 60 Hawkes Ave. in Columbus, William W. Gillivan, born Madison Co., age 66, anemia
- 1938, June 11, Mary Cotton, born W. Jefferson on Dec. 14, 1872, age 65, cancer; parents Martin Ricks and Teresa? March
- 1938, June 29, William J. Hann, born W. Jefferson on Aug. 8, 1880, age 57, cancer; parents Maurice Hann and Barbara Frey
- 1939, Mar. 19, Anna Flanagan, born Madison Co., age 70, heart trouble
- 1939, Apr. 5, Jerry Williams, born Madison Co., age 7 months; parents Robert Williams and Leona Thompson
- 1943, Dec. 14, Mary Engelsperger, age 71; brother William Engelsperger
- 1943, Apr. 18, Margaret Nordman, unmarried age 79?; received sacraments at St. Anthony Hospital
- 1943, Oct. 3, Mary Smith, age 55; parents Andrew and Catherine Smith; later disinterred and moved to St. Joseph Cemetery, Columbus
- 1945, May 20, Ed Quinn, age 84, single
- 1947, May 16, John D. Kelley; daughter Mrs. Robert Connor?
- 1951, Feb. 17, Mrs. Johanna Solomon, age 86
- 1954, July 13, John Frey, born W. Jefferson, age 70
- 1955, Jan. 23 in Columbus, Catherine (Creedon) McCloskey, born W. Jefferson, age 81, tuberculosis
- 1955, May 13, Robin Crabtree, born W. Jefferson, age 1 1/2 years, sp. meningitis; buried Mt. Calvary (East)
- 1956, Apr. 17, Walter J. Hann, born W. Jefferson, age 80
- 1956, July 10, Daniel Frey, born W. Jefferson, age 79, heart trouble
- 1956, Aug. 18, James McCloskey, born Columbus, age 73
- 1957, Jan. 19, Robert Hann, born W. Jefferson, stroke
- 1957, July 19, Bernard Engelsperger, born W. Jefferson, age 83, stroke
- 1958, Sept. 14, Helen Nora Higgins, 78 [cemetery not listed]
- 1958, Dec. 18, Gabriel Diana, 65 [cemetery not listed]
- 1960, Jan. 24, William Engelsperger, 75
- 1962, Oct. 2, Margaret Frey, 78
- 1963, Mar. 9, Frederick Richard Hansen, 8 days
- 1964, July 20, Marie Hannah Ryan, 68
- 1967 [1966?], Dec. 26, Adam Hann, 89
- 1970, Jan. 12, Grace Tinkler Dutcher, 78 [cemetery not listed]
- 1971, Jan. 21, Quinn twins, at birth [cemetery listed as St. Joseph, but the pastor wrote several that way and later amended to Calvary]
- 1972, Dec. 12, Bernard M. Ryan, 80
- 1973, Feb. 19, Miss Mary Hann, 85
- 1978, between Jan. 8 and June 15, the name Steve Barney appears with no other information
- Coming in July: Remote Births Recorded at Marion St. Mary*

Parish Histories of 1903 and 1907

(Continued from Vol. XXX, No.5)

LAWRENCE COUNTY

continued...

Ironton - St. Joseph Parish

Rev. John Schneider filled out the form, overflowing many of the spaces, and sent it to Father Mulhane in 1907 or 1908.

1. [Foundation date] German Cath[olics] held 1st meeting on 20th of Dec. 1863 to organize. John F. Goldcamp chairman, Christian Hasenauer Sec. A committee of two sent to Archb. Purcell to request a Germ. Priest at least monthly & permission to build church. A collect[ion was] taken up to pay Com's expense. A subscription raised amt. 466.00. On Dec. 27, 1863 Com. reported a...meeting that priest would be sent & permission was granted to build a church. Permanent organization & constitution drawn up. Pastor then appointed President, Vice Pres. John F. Goldcamp, Sec. Christian Hessenauer, Treas. John Wanner, Com[mittee]. Fr. Sieber, Fr. Buhr, Peter Stich. Decided to procure lot & built [build] church. A Com. appointed. Dec. 29 Committee reports three lots on East end of Ironton.

2. [Property purchase dates] Dec. 31, 1863 Three lots bought price \$450.00 bet Adams & Jefferson & 2 & 3d Sts.

Jan. 26, 1864 13 lots bought for \$1850. & afterwards [sold] to Germ. Cath. settlers at \$250 corner lot; interior \$175. Profit to built [build] church.

1886 Two lots on corner of 2 & Adams & 3d & Adams bought price ?

1907 Two lots & 16 feet bought, giving Church the whole square priced \$5500.

1st church frame erected 1864 dedicated Sept. 21st 1864 by Archb. Purcell. Rev. A. Donohue, of St. Lawrence & Schreiber & Young of Ashland assisting, Rev. Albrink preached.

3. [Schools and teachers] 1st School a frame building erected 1865 finished in Oct. 1865 cost \$938. John Veske appointed teacher in Jan. 1866. Lay male teachers until 1878. Sept. 1878 two Sisters of St. Francis of Rochester Minn. Teachers ever since. Sr. M. DeSales coming in 1883 & here yet.

Present School erected in 1880 brick 4 rooms. 5th room opened in frame building on new property in 1907.

Names of some of the lay teachers before 1878 were Mr. J. Stack, Mr. A. Cony [?], Melchior Abele, Clem. Weber, Aman Fischer, Charles Ari..[?], Mr. M. Saug & Henry Schwier.

4. [Date of rectory] 1880 brick; two stories; 8 rooms.

1895 addition made containing 3 rooms. Bay windows & tower added.

5. [History of church and other buildings] The little frame church 50 x 32 x 18 feet high soon proved too small so that under Father Fischer an addition was built to it also of frame & of about the same size as the original church, built however transversally making the church cruciform. Under Rev. Boden yr 1887 the new church was begun The corner stone was laid on 19th of April 1887 by Bishop Watterson. The church is Gothic 135 x 64 with seating capacity of 800. It was built under many difficulties. The contractor was unable to finish it & it was necessary to complete it by the day under supervision of Mr. John Wanner, who by the breaking of a scaffold lost his life. The bondsman of the contractor refused to settle the difference which entailed a law suit. Rev. Boden resigned & Rev. J. B. Schmidt was appointed Jan. 1889. Finally on Nov 28 1889 Thanksgiving day the church was dedicated by Bishop Watterson. The cost of the church would be hard to give. The High Altar of black & white walnut was donated by the Married Ladies Soc. The side altar by St. Geo. Soc. Y. M. Socy Y. L. Soc. St. Rose's Sod. The pulpit by Mrs. Theresa Lang. The Confessional by Jos. Lutz, the Pipe Organ, cost \$3000. by St. Martins Soc. The chandeliers by Kt. of St. Geo. The large bell 2000 lbs by Martin & Margeret Hetty; the small bell by Jos. Lutz.

6. [Cemetery, dates, consecration, administration] St. Josephs Cemetery about 4 acres was bought in 1870. Calvary Cemetery was bought in 1884 about 13 acres. St. Josephs cemetery was sold in 1890. In 1905 one & one half acres more were bought & added to Calvary Cemetery to prevent encroachments. Of these 14 1/2 acres 4 are consecrated. The rest is

used by the Sexton. The cemetery is under control of a subcommittee of the Church Wardens.

7. [Title] [blank]

8. [Pastors]

Rev. L. Schreiber of Lick Run attended the church monthly from Sep. 1864 to Dec. 1864

Then Rev. P. J. Weisinger Pine Grove from Dec. 1864 to Dec. 1865

Rev. L. J. Schreiber Dec. 1865-Mar. 1866

Sylvester Szierpankewisz Mar. 1866-Nov. 1866

Rev. G. H. Ahrens 1st Resident Pastor Nov. 1866 to Dec. 1867 removed to Columbus

Rev. H. Fischer Dec. 1867 to Febr. 1874 resigned went to Europe

Rev. J. B. Gambier [Gamber] Feb. 15, 1874 to April 1878 removed

Rev. M. Weber Apr. 1878 - 6 Aug. 1883 resigned returned to Europe

Rev. W. F. Boden Aug 1883-Dec. 1888 resigned & appointed to Athens

Rev. J. B. Schmitt Jan. 1889-Aug. 1899 removed to Dresden

Rev. George Montag Aug. 1899-Nov. 1902 died in St. Francis Hospital Col buried in Canal Dover

Rev. John J. Schneider Dec. 4, 1902

9. [Assistants] none

10. [Dates of each pastor etc.] answered above

11. [Method of funding] As related in number two the ground was bought by subscription. The churches were paid by subscription & colletions, generally monthly coll.

12. [Dates of funding and expenditures] [blank]

13. [Laity worthy of mention] Benefactors: Fred Kausick, Lawrence Lutz, Joseph Lutz, Joseph Musik, Henry Bonnig, Martin Hetty, Margaret Hetty

14. [Anything else of importance] [blank]

LICKING COUNTY

Jersey

St. Joseph's, Johnstown, Nov. 25th 1907.

Rev. & Dear Father:

In reply to your honored of the 20th of November, would say that the following are the particulars I could find out concerning the history of St. Joseph's Church, Johnstown, Licking County.

The first place of worship in this place was a log Church, built in 1850 and attended occasionally by late Archbishop Lamy, late bishop Fitzpatrick [Fitzgerald?], bishop Gallagher and R. Father Bender. In 1871, Rev. Father Murray built the first part of the present Church, which for some reason

or other was not dedicated until the year 1876. The bishop who dedicated it was late bishop Rosecrans. The second part was added in 1881 and dedicated in the same year by late bishop Watterson.

The priests who attended it at that time once a month were R. Father Kien, Rev. F. Clarke, R. F. Meara, R. F. DeCailly, R. F. Schlichter. Rev. Father Gladu was the first resident pastor... After him came Rev. Father Johnson, then Rev. Father Ritter and at last bringing up the rear Rev. Father Pollmann.

Sanguine in the hope that these few lines will help towards the compilation of the history of this diocese

I beg to remain respectfully yours,
J. Ph. Vonville

Newark - Blessed Sacrament Parish

Father Charles Watterson submitted these few facts on parish stationary:

Church of the Blessed Sacrament

Charles H. A. Watterson, Pastor

Newark, Ohio

1. [Foundation date]

(1) In April 1904 appointment was made. Property purchased in May 1904

(2) Ground broke August 29th 1904 Corner stone laid by B'p Hartley Oct. 16/04. (Sermon by candle light.)

(3) Church dedicated March 12, 1905

2. [Property purchase dates]

3. [Schools and teachers]

(4) School opened September 1905

(5) Sisters of St. Dominic.

4. [Date of rectory]

(6) Priest's house purchased in 1904

5. [History of church and other buildings]

(7) No new property has been purchased

6. [Cemetery, dates, consecration, administration]

(8) No cemetery

7. [Title]

(9) All property is in B'p. Hartley's name.

8. [Pastors]

(10) Watterson - 1st pastor

9. [Assistants]

10. [Dates of each pastor etc.]

11. [Method of funding]

(11) Subscriptions - Monthly Collections

12. [Dates of funding and expenditures]

13. [Laity worthy of mention]

14. [Anything else of importance]

Two Labor Leaders from Zanesville

Dennis A. Hayes (1865-1917)

Dennis Hayes was one of two members of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Zanesville who became leaders in the national labor movement. He was born in County Clare, Ireland and was brought to Zanesville at an early age. As a ragged boy of twelve years he sought and was given a job at the Kearns-Gorsuch bottle factory there. His first employer later remarked, "I liked the way he went about his work. He was busy every minute."

At the age of eighteen he started to blow glass in Zanesville but when the factory went non-union he moved to St. Louis to complete his apprenticeship under union conditions. He then moved to Pittsburgh and became active in the labor movement, becoming an officer in the Trades Assembly in 1890. In 1894 he was elected vice president and in 1897 president of the Glass Bottle Blowers' Association. In 1900 he was elected sixth vice president of the American Federation of Labor. He held both of these positions until his death. Hayes was one of the first men in the country to urge legislation restricting child labor, based on his experiences with child labor in the glass factories. He died in Philadelphia, but his remains were returned

to Zanesville for a funeral from St. Thomas Church, with prominent labor leaders from all parts of the nation in attendance.

John A. Voll (1868-1924)

John Voll, a native of Zanesville, followed in the footsteps of Dennis Hayes. He rose from a minor position in the Glass Bottle Blowers' Association to be elected vice president in 1906. He was elected president of the Ohio Federation of Labor in 1909. He was largely responsible for the enactment of the Ohio Workmen's Compensation law and other progressive measures. The governor of Pennsylvania appointed him a member of the Pennsylvania State Constitutional Commission. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus. His death occurred suddenly, in Atlantic City, New Jersey, in 1924. Like Hayes, his remains were brought back to Zanesville for burial, with a funeral at St. Thomas Church attended by national labor leaders. The national and state labor organizations erected his monument at Calvary Cemetery.

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