

The Chesterton Review

logical, psychological, and theatrical, are ones to which Shakespeare never provides definitive answers; rather, he prefers to keep the issues alive by staging ghosts in a variety of guises and from shifting perspectives. Each of these stagings has its own distinct and subtle meanings, but there are three fundamental perspectives to which Shakespeare repeatedly turns: the ghost as a figure of false surmise, the ghost as a figure of history's nightmare, and the ghost as a figure of deep psychic disturbance. Half-hidden in all of these is a fourth perspective: the ghost as a figure of the theatre" (157).

He looks first at the "ghost as figure of false surmise": as one of the effects of "anxious misreading," by exploring such plays as *The Comedy of Errors* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Comedies, Greenblatt says, tend to emphasize the fantastic nature of ghosts, "figured in moonlit Athenian woods or the sea-coast of Illyria" (164). By contrast, in discussing ghosts as figures of "history's nightmare," Greenblatt says, "histories and tragedies alike insist that the terrible events they depict are historically real, an insistence that intensifies the weirdness of their ghostly dreams" (164). *Richard III* and *Julius Caesar* are two plays, for instance, that Greenblatt uses to trace the relationship between ghosts and those who bear the burdens of history, for good or bad purposes. *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, on the other hand, serve as powerful examples of plays dealing with the

relationship between ghosts and deep psychic disturbances. "The imagery of his suffering," writes Greenblatt, "places Lear in Hell or Purgatory—as we have seen, their pains were indistinguishable—but these realms of misery are not for him located in the otherworld; they are here and now, his waking reality" (186). He adds that *King Lear* "insists with fierce yet humane stringency that purgatorial suffering is the condition of life, not afterlife" (186). Virtually everything in *Macbeth*, Greenblatt further states, draws us closer to the drama of spectral disturbances. Ultimately, *Macbeth* "transpires on the border of fantasy and reality" (193).

"Hidden" in all of these instances is the idea that "ghosts are good theatre." Ghosts, the author writes, "are good for thinking about theatre's capacity to fashion realities, to call realities into question, to tell compelling stories, to puncture the illusions that these stories generate, and to salvage something on the other side of disillusionment" (200). An interest in ghosts—"wanting to 'speak to the dead'"—is precisely what sent Greenblatt back to *Hamlet*. Even though he dedicates only one chapter, "Remember Me," to the play, he reminds us that throughout the book, he is distributing ideas and details, in "tiny, almost invisible particles," that bear tellingly on it. He explores how *Hamlet* assimilates the Protestant-Catholic debate, how it deals profoundly with memory and the burdens of the past, how it confronts truth and uncertainty, how it

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unfolds along the borderland of the spectrally fantastic: "But if we do not let the Ghost vanish altogether, we can perhaps begin to answer these questions, by recognizing that the psychological in Shakespeare's tragedy is constructed almost entirely out of the theological, and specifically out of the issue of remembrance that, as we have seen, lay at the heart of the crucial early-sixteenth-century debate about Purgatory" (229).

To understand *Hamlet* on along these lines, Greenblatt says, "We do not need, however, to believe that Shakespeare was himself a secret Catholic sympathizer; we need only to recognize how alert he was to the materials that were being made available to him. At a deep level there is something magnificently opportunistic, appropriative, absorptive, even cannibalistic about Shakespeare's art. . . . In the case of Purgatory, important forces had been busily struggling for decades to prepare the playwright's feast. And the struggle did not end with the performance of the play or the playwright's death" (254). While Greenblatt is right, he misses a good opportunity here to talk about the religious imagination. Shakespeare was not just alert to his materials; he was alert to them in a particular way: alert to what they suggested about the given meanings of Christian revelation and older beliefs. This awareness forced Shakespeare's imagination outward to those truths that everywhere suggested to him that the afterlife was

not merely a metaphor or a fiction, but a reality, one full of mystery and, in the final analysis, one free of ideological strife.

The book succeeds because one feels that Greenblatt really has let the play "wash" over him again. More than any of his books, *Hamlet in Purgatory* makes us believe that he has felt a "gravitational pull," not just from the historical and cultural materials he uses, but also from the play itself. From the beginning, as he says, he wanted to feel the "tragedy's magical intensity" (4). Here the play really is the thing, and Greenblatt's scholarly efforts have put it before us in a fresh and thrilling way. Like any good ghost story, his book finds its own place along the borderland of mystery. It does compel the reader to ask whether there really are more things in heaven and earth (and in the play) than are "dreamt of" in philosophy.

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Arthur Preuss, *Journalist and Voice of German and Conservative Catholics in America, 1871-1934* by Rev. Rory T. Conley. (New York: Peter Lang, c. 1998) 361 pages, including notes, bibliography and index. \$58.95

This is a book that should appeal to a variety of readers. In the first place, for anyone interested in the history of the Catholic Church in the United States, this book will be a delight. It details the life and work of

Arthur Preuss, longtime Publisher and Editor of the *Fortnightly Review* (1894-1934), and sometime Editor and contributor to numerous other publications. As such, he was involved in most of the important controversies that affected the life of the Catholic Church in America, including the quarrel between Irish and German Catholics of the 1890s, the controversy over Americanism, the Spanish-American War, World War I, the establishment of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, now the United States Catholic Conference, the effort in the 1920s to create a Federal Department of Education and the 1928 election campaign of Catholic Alfred E. Smith. That many of these events are hardly known today by American Catholics is evidence of the value of this book for those who need to know and understand that history. Secondly, this book will also be of value to all American Catholics who are trying to understand what it means to be a Catholic. For Preuss's constant theme and pre-occupation was with the contrast between the American Way of Life that most of his co-religionists so uncritically accepted, and the Faith once delivered to the saints.

Arthur Preuss was no mere newspaper man. He was someone who felt a God-given vocation to his work which he regarded as a deliberate attempt both to enlighten public opinion and to defend Catholic truth. Preuss prepared for his life work not by studying journalism, but by earn-

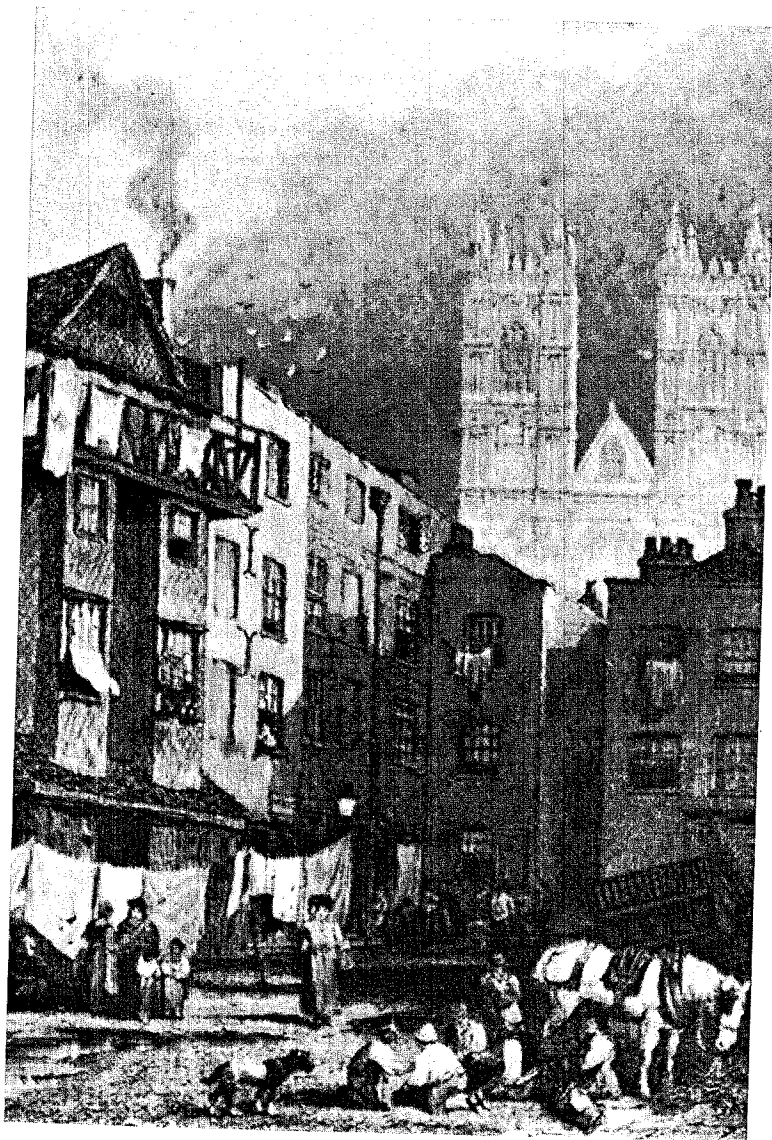
ing an M.A. in philosophy and later by beginning a doctorate in the same subject. He was always opposed to superficial or sensational newspaper work that was motivated chiefly by the desire for profit and increased circulation. In the early 1920s when Bishop William Russell, Chairman of the National Catholic Welfare Conference's Press Department, hired a reporter from the Hearst newspaper chain to take charge of the newly formed Catholic News Service, Preuss "was outraged [that] the News Service was placed under the direction of journalists who had earned their credentials not in service to Catholic journalism, but in the 'yellow journalism' financed by William Randolph Hearst." As this example suggests, Preuss was often at odds with his fellow Catholics. Although both orthodox and devout, Preuss was a bitter critic of the often mediocre and compromising way of life of his co-religionists, both clergy and laity. In fact, from the Americanist crisis of the 1890s, Preuss was convinced that the Church in America had taken the road of compromise with Capitalism, with jingoistic patriotism and commercialism and with popular prejudices, such as hostility or indifference toward blacks. He was not above criticizing the hierarchy—he called Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul "a chauvinistic prelate who demeaned himself as if he and his followers had an exclusive patent on American patriotism" and he referred to the "incompetence" of the Apostolic Delegate,

Archbishop Satolli—so it is no surprise to learn that he was sometimes in trouble with various bishops, and that he even dropped the word "Catholic" from the title of his journal in order to prevent bishops from claiming authority to regulate its contents. When the thin-skinned Cardinal Farley of New York objected to some remarks which he construed as criticism of himself, an official at the Apostolic Delegation in Washington actually dictated to Preuss the exact words of the apology that he would have to print in his paper if he wished to escape ecclesiastical censure!

As an Editor Preuss was following in the footsteps of his father, Edward Preuss, who as a Lutheran had taught both at the university of Berlin and at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis before converting to Catholicism in 1872, and then serving for many years as Editor of *Die Amerika*, a St. Louis German Catholic daily. Arthur Preuss's own career as Editor had originally begun on the Chicago *Katholisches Sonntagsblatt*. It was in Chicago that he founded the *Review* (later the *Catholic Fortnightly Review*), which in 1896 he brought back to his hometown of St. Louis. There he also worked as Editor of *Die Amerika* from 1896 to 1905, all the while continuing with the editing of his own journal. Meanwhile he had also become an Editor with the b. Herder Book Company of St. Louis, and in this capacity he translated and edited the dogmatic theology series of Fr. Joseph Pohle

(known for years as the Pohle-Preuss series) as well as other German theological works. Since the *Review* barely paid for itself, Preuss had to undertake these other tasks in order to feed his growing family, which eventually comprised eleven children. When Preuss died in December 1934, although he still had many enemies, he was recognized as an important figure among American Catholics. The Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Cicognani and nine other archbishops sent a letter of condolence to Preuss's wife, an address which was read during his funeral Mass. He was the longest serving Catholic Editor of his time in this country, and his record has not yet been surpassed.

In order to understand Preuss, one matter that must be discussed concerns a word that appears in the title of this book: Is it correct to call Preuss a "conservative," and if so in what sense? Fr. Conley suggests that Preuss, and most of the German-American Catholic intellectuals of that era, were conservatives in the sense that they opposed a way of life that was coming into being both in Germany and the United States. This new way of life included such things as the growing power of the centralizing and bureaucratic State, the increasing commercialization of life, and a compromising attitude on the part of the predominantly Irish-American hierarchy toward the American tendency to privatize religion and unduly adapt to the activist American character, a development



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which culminated in the Americanist heresy controversy of 1899. As Fr. Conley says, "In trying to define Arthur Preuss's outlook on the issues of the day, it has been convenient to describe them as being 'conservative.' This is a term that Preuss regularly applied to himself. However, it should be kept in mind that in describing himself as a conservative, Preuss, as always, was thinking in religious, and specifically Catholic terms. Thus, while his support for radical social reconstruction was in conflict with American political conservatism, it was fully consistent with his views as a conservative Catholic."

Although this may make Preuss and his fellow German intellectuals conservatives in some sense of that word, it is not a very useful description for someone who was always a bitter critic of Capitalism, a supporter of Senator Robert LaFollette and his Progressive Party in the 1924 elections, later a supporter of Franklin Roosevelt, and a constant advocate for civil rights for American blacks. Even if an author is careful to explain the sense in which he is using the term "Conservative," a host of misleading associations will arise in the mind. And if this is so, then we may question the usefulness as an analytical device of calling someone a conservative, even if Preuss called himself such. Indeed, he also described himself as a "radical." "Conservative" easily becomes a meaningless label that at the same time promotes vague ideas in the reader's

mind which in Preuss's case are entirely unfounded. One of the reasons that many historians besides Fr. Conley label Preuss and his associates as conservatives is that their opponents in the great battles in the latter third of the nineteenth century to define what it means to be Catholic and American, are usually known as "liberals." In 1984, when Preuss started his *Review*, the Church in America was deeply divided by two competing visions of American Catholicism. The first one, the one that eventually largely prevailed, was promoted most notably by Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, Denis O'Connell, Rector of the North American College in Rome, and Bishop John Keane, Rector of the Catholic University in Washington and later Archbishop of Dubuque. These men believed that in America the Catholic Church had found her natural milieu, that Catholicism and Americanism, by a fortunate Providence, perfectly complemented and supported each other. They lauded the American victory in the Spanish-American War and the subsequent establishment of an American colonial regime in Puerto Rico, the Philippines and elsewhere, for they believed that American civilisation represented the future and that the traditional Catholic cultures of the world were moribund. They saw Democracy and Capitalism as natural allies of the Church, and indeed, Archbishop Ireland was a confidant both of the leaders of the Republican party and of big busi-

ness. This group of Churchmen wanted the German, Italian and Slavic Catholic immigrants to be Americanized as soon as possible and they had little use for any form of Catholic separatism. Archbishop Ireland had even introduced a plan in his diocese whereby (in the words of historian Theodore Roemer) the public Board of Education "rented the Catholic school buildings at a nominal rate, approved the sisters as the teachers, and paid them from the school funds, and introduced the public school system. Before and after school hours the buildings reverted to the use of the parishes, and it was then that the sisters carried out the religious instruction curriculum."

This school controversy came to a head in 1890 when Archbishop Ireland addressed the annual convention of the National Education Association and (again quoting Roemer) "used some expressions in praise of the public school system that were taken to portend the abandonment of the parochial school system." Although Ireland's opponents included some Irish prelates, such as Archbishop Corrigan of New York and Bishop McQuaid of Rochester, the majority of those opposed to what was becoming known as Americanism were German Catholics, both clerics and laymen. Sometimes their opposition was seen, both then and now, as simply a hidebound desire to keep to the ways of the old country and as a refusal to make the inevitable adaptation to their new homeland. But this was not really the

case, certainly not with Preuss whose statements, properly understood, show this very clearly. When he began his *Review*, he said that he wanted "A German paper in English dress" and that he wanted to promote "the grand ideas for which the German press of this country has for so many years been fighting." At first glance, it might seem that he simply wanted to cater to the national feeling or even to the clannishness of German-American Catholics. But this would be to misunderstand him. For by making the choice to publish in English, when there were still hundreds of German-language papers published across the United States and many thousands of German speakers, Preuss showed that he understood that the ideals which German Catholics stood for were not simply German or national, but that they had a basis which was more fundamental than ethnic pride or tradition. Preuss saw that German would not survive as a common language in the United States, that eventually it must yield to English. Many German newspapers and magazines continued to publish in German until declining readership or the prejudices occasioned by World War I forced them to change. But Preuss wanted to bring the universal truths held by German Catholics out of the German "ghetto," as it were, so as to make them available to all American Catholics. The English-speaking Catholic press was often on the side of the Americanizers, and Preuss and his associates saw this issue not simply as a battle over language or na-

tional culture, but one which went to the heart of what it means to be a Catholic. For if Ireland and his supporters were to prevail, there was a danger that the Church might uncritically accept whatever the world happened to fancy at any particular time or place, under the guise of making necessary adaptations to current conditions.

"Americanism," of course, was condemned by Leo XIII in 1899, and though all the Americanist leaders immediately disclaimed any connection with the condemned ideas, these ideas were so far from dead that Preuss spent the rest of his days fighting them. At a distance of seventy years or more, it is tempting to regard that era in the history of the Church as a kind of paradise. But during the 1928 presidential election, Governor Alfred E. South said that should a conflict arise between "religious principle and political duty in the United States" a Catholic politician would resolve such a conflict by "the dictates of his conscience" and that "There is no ecclesiastical tribunal which would have the slightest claim upon the obedience of Catholic communicants in the resolution of such a conflict." These statements foreshadow, not only John Kennedy's similar capitulation in Houston in 1960, but even the sophisticated arguments of contemporary Catholic politicians who defend their pro-abortion voting records.

Similarly, the current controversies over when and to what extent

the various national committees can speak for the hierarchy of the United States were foreshadowed by the controversies involving the National Catholic Welfare Council (later Conference) in the 1920s. This body, originally called the National Catholic War Council, had originated during World War I to coordinate Catholic war work, but it continued after the War. Preuss became a determined opponent of the Council, fearing that it would represent itself as the only voice of Catholics and that it would seek to regiment legitimate differences of opinion in the Catholic press. He himself often differed with its stands on public questions. Particularly was this the case in the debate over the proposed Federal Department of Education in 1925. Originally the Administrative Committee of the NCWC recommended to the bishops that they remain neutral about the proposed legislation, but eventually when some bishops and many lay Catholics objected to this recommendation, the NCWC actively opposed the bill, but nevertheless felt compelled to support a compromise measure, which had in fact been ghost-written by a layman who was an official of the NCWC Legal Department. Preuss and many other Catholics opposed the compromise bill as well, as an effort to increase the federal role in education, in part fearing an attempt to regulate Catholic schools. But equally, Preuss objected to the notion that the NCWC spoke for all Catholics or even for all bishops,

Again, these issues are still with us today, and to see how they originated cannot but help us to understand better our own situation.

But this was by no means the sum total of Arthur Preuss's work. He continued his opposition to Consumerist Capitalism throughout his career. Indeed, he saw Capitalism as at the root of the problems of the modern age and wrote that "it is Capitalism rather than Socialism which lies at the root of the social question." Preuss criticized the tactics of the government during the so-called Red Scare after the First World War. Though Preuss was always an opponent of Socialism, Victor Berger, the Socialist elected to the House of Representatives from Wisconsin, said of him, "Would that we had a few Catholics with his intellectual capability and moral caliber in Congress." Preuss also was an early champion of the liturgical movement, a proponent of biblical scholarship by Catholics even when some feared that it would overturn long-received opinions, and during the Modernist crisis, someone who bravely defended several men whom he regarded as falsely accused of that heresy. Fr. Conley states that "the ultimate significance of Arthur Preuss's life must, of course, be left up to the Master whom he endeavored to serve." I would suggest though, that although most of what Preuss stood for is currently forgotten or ignored by Catholics and he himself is unknown, nevertheless he and his colleagues, such as Frederick

Kenkel, longtime Director of the Central Bureau in St. Louis, set forth a critique of America and of the modern world that still has much value, however little prospect there is of it being accepted. Until faithful Catholics in the United States learn from Preuss and his companions that an acceptance of Capitalism and a celebration of the secular messianic myth of 1776 are compromises with modern liberalism they will never attain to that fullness of faith and Catholic life that Arthur Preuss exemplified throughout his long career. May this book, then, begin a critical conversation among us and may the example of Preuss's radicalism inspire us to abandon our compromises with the American *mythos* and wholeheartedly adopt Catholic principles in every part of our life and culture.

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The Mind of the Universe by Mariano Artigas. Templeton Foundation Press, 2000.

In recent years there has been a growing interest in the relation between science and theology. Many books have been written, mostly by scientists with little knowledge of philosophy or theology, and some by theologians with little direct experience of science. The best books are by those with firsthand experience of all these disciplines, and outstanding among them are the many books by the Benedictine priest Professor

Stanley Jaki, who has doctorates in systematic theology and in nuclear physics. Now he is joined by Professor Mariano Artigas, a scientist who is also Dean of the Faculty of Ecclesiology in the University of Pamplona, Navarra in Spain. The aim of his book is to examine modern science in all its complexity, to justify its conclusions and to place it within a theistic perspective. As the result of many researches during the last century we now have some understanding of the universe as a whole and of its development since the primeval event about fifteen billion years ago. We know about the formation of the nucleons and how the nuclei of heavier elements were formed in the interior of stars, and ultimately made possible the amazing variety of living things. There is of course much that we do not know, but there is little doubt that the main outlines are correct. When we stand back and think about this stupendous story, many questions force themselves on us. Did it all just happen, or was it planned by a Mind? What is the purpose of it all? If there is such a Mind, does it care about us? What is our part, if any, in the plan? These are not scientific questions, and they cannot be answered by scientific methods, but they are frequently asked as we learn more and more about the universe.

Professor Artigas believes that the universe is permeated by a rationality that requires the presence of a controlling mind. Examination of the current scientific worldview

shows that it provides a perspective that includes spiritual values. To explore this in detail he first shows that science itself rests on definite beliefs about the world, namely that it is good, rational, contingent and open to the human mind. These are all Christian beliefs, and this explains why science in its modern form achieved its first viable birth during the High Middle Ages when for the first time in history there was a civilization permeated by Christian beliefs. It is well-known that it is not possible to derive any religious statements from scientific facts or theories: there is an unbridgeable gap between fact and value. Professor Artigas points out that this gap is similar to that emphasized by many philosophers of science, namely that all scientific statements are in principle fallible because they are based on a limited number of observations or calculations. Some authors have used this to argue that it is therefore impossible for science to be a threat to any religious belief. As a scientist, Artigas rejects this argument because it does less than justice to science. Whatever some philosophers may say, scientists know that they attain true and valid knowledge, although of course it is incomplete and subject to development in the light of further results. He therefore sets out to validate scientific knowledge. To do this he lists five criteria that scientists use to validate their results: explanatory power, predictive power, accuracy of explanation, the convergence of varied and independent proofs and the