

own plan of campaign. Whether a battle be ticketed in the history books as lost or won, the test is which side can continue to strike. He continued to strike, and to strike harder than ever, up to the very moment of that yet greater experience which changed all such military symbols into military facts. A man with instincts unspoiled and in that sense almost untouched, he would have always answered quite naturally to the autochthonous appeal of patriotism; but it is again characteristic of him that he desired, in his own phrase, to "rationalize patriotism," which he did upon the principles of Rousseau, that contractual theory which, in these pages, he connects with the great name of Jefferson. But things even deeper than patriotism impelled him against Prussianism. His enemy was the barbarian when he enslaves, as something more hellish even than the barbarian when he slays. His was the spiritual instinct by which Prussian order was worse than Prussian anarchy; and nothing was so inhuman as an inhuman humanitarianism. If you had asked him for what he fought and died amid the wasted fields of France and Flanders, he might very probably have answered that it was to save the world from German social reforms.

This note, necessarily so broken and bemused, must reach its useless end. I have said nothing of numberless things that should be remembered at the mention of his name; of his books, which were great pamphlets and may yet be permanent pamphlets; of his journalistic exposures of other evils besides the Marconi, exposures that have made a new political atmosphere in the very election that is stirring around us; of his visit to America, which initiated him into an international friendship which is the foundation of this book. Least of all can I write of him apart from his work; of that loss nothing can be said by those who do not suffer it, and less still by those who do. And his experiences in life and death were so much greater even than my experiences of him, that a double incapacity makes me dumb. A portrait is impossible; as a friend he is too near me, and as a hero too faraway.

G. K. CHESTERTON.

### **AUTHOR'S PREFACE**

I have taken advantage of a very brief respite from other, and in my judgment more valuable, employment, to produce this short sketch of the story of a great people, now our Ally. My motive has been mainly that I do not think that any such sketch, concentrated enough to be readable by the average layman who has

other things to do (especially in these days) than to study more elaborate and authoritative histories, at present exists, and I have thought that in writing it I might perhaps be discharging some little part of the heavy debt of gratitude which I owe to America for the hospitality I received from her when I visited her shores during the early months of the War.

This book is in another sense the product of that visit. What I then saw and heard of contemporary America so fascinated me that--believing as I do that the key to every people is in its past--I could not rest until I had mastered all that I could of the history of my delightful hosts. This I sought as much as possible from the original sources, reading voraciously, and at the time merely for my pleasure, such records as I could get of old debates and of the speech and correspondence of the dead. The two existing histories, which I also read, and upon which I have drawn most freely, are that of the present President of the United States and that of Professor Rhodes, dealing with the period from 1850 to 1876. With the conclusions of the latter authority it will be obvious that I am in many respects by no means at one; but I think it the more necessary to say that without a careful study of his book I could neither have formed my own conclusions nor ventured to challenge his. The reading that I did at the time of which I speak is the foundation of what I have now written. It will be well understood that a Private in the British Army, even when invalided home for a season, has not very great opportunities for research. I think it very likely that errors of detail may be discovered in these pages; I am quite sure that I could have made the book a better one if I had been able to give more time to revising my studies. Yet I believe that the story told here is substantially true; and I am very sure that it is worth the telling.

If I am asked why I think it desirable at this moment to attempt, however inadequately, a history of our latest Ally, I answer that at this moment the whole future of our civilization may depend upon a thoroughly good understanding between those nations which are now joined in battle for its defence, and that ignorance of each other's history is perhaps the greatest menace to such an understanding. To take one instance at random--how many English writers have censured, sometimes in terms of friendly sorrow, sometimes in a manner somewhat pharisaical, the treatment of Negroes in Southern States in all its phases, varying from the provision of separate waiting-rooms to sporadic outbreaks of lynching! How few ever mention, or seem to have even heard the word "Reconstruction"--a word which, in its historical connotation, explains all!

I should, perhaps, add a word to those Americans who may chance to read this book. To them, of course, I must offer a somewhat different apology. I believe that, with all my limitations, I can tell my fellow-countrymen things about the