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ECCLESIASTICAL VAGARIES.

Ecclesiastical vagaries appear to be the favorite amusement of some dignitaries who claim to have and to be able to transmit Apostolical succession, and those who contrive to exhibit the most extraordinary fakes appear to be the Bishops of the Anglican communion and of its sister Church, the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States.

It will be remembered by our readers that it was a Western Bishop of the latter Church which first brought forward into prominence the fraud Vilatte, who is now figuring as the first Archbishop of the newly-started Polish National Church of the United States.

Vilatte had managed to gather in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, a small congregation of Belgians and Walloons, on whom he passed himself as a priest of the so-called Old Catholic Church, and with this congregation he was admitted as a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He persuaded these people, who were disconcerted on account of not having a French priest, that they could remain good Catholics though separated from the authority of the Pope, and in order to retain them he went through the pretence of saying Mass and administering the sacraments of the Catholic Church, while receiving the support of the Protestant Episcopal Mission Board of Wisconsin, which was glad to have the adhesion of a knot of Catholics under any pretence. The Episcopalians, however, did not enjoy this state of things for long, for now Vilatte is figuring as the Old Catholic Archbishop of America, being at the head of a Church of his own making, which he calls the Polish National Church.

This new fangled creation, however, is not destined to have either a long life or a prosperous one, no, notwithstanding its pompous title. It is composed of only a few Poles in Cincinnati who have followed the lead of an ex-communicated priest there, together with Vilatte's little Fond du Lac congregation; and with Vilatte it is evidently a matter of dollars and cents; for it is stated that he demanded, and we believe received, \$500 for his services in instituting this new Church.

It is satisfactory to know that the Poles of America have no sympathy whatsoever with this absurd movement, as it was resolved unanimously by the delegates to the twenty-first annual convention of the Polish Catholic American Union that the Cincinnati priest who presumed to speak on behalf of the Poles has no claim to represent the Catholic Poles under any pretence. He is not even himself a Pole, though he has assumed a Polish name from an unworthy motive.

These circumstances recall to mind an event in which Bishop Cox, of Buffalo, known as the Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Western New York, figured when he visited Paris to administer Confirmation to Pere Hyacinth's congregation of Old Catholics, a sect which consisted only of Pere Hyacinth's own family and a few adherents. This sect is now defunct.

A recent telegram from Madrid gives the intelligence that Baron Plunket, the Anglican Bishop of Dublin, has opened a Protestant Episcopal Church in that city, and has consecrated a Bishop of Spain. This new Church will have no more connection with the Church of England than the fact of its denial of the Pope's authority; so that it appears that according to the theory of these Anglican dignitaries the only doctrine necessary on which to found a Christian Church is hatred of the Pope.

But on what plea do these gentlemen attack the Pope and repudiate his authority? It is on the plea that he is an usurped authority, and that he has no right to exercise authority in England, or other countries outside of Italy. How is all this to be reconciled with their assumption of Episcopal authority in France and Spain, where there are already real Bishops totally unlike the spurious ones that thus foist

themselves on those who for some cause of dissatisfaction or other are willing to accept their ministrations.

These proceedings are much on a par with the assumption of the Archbishop of Canterbury in presuming to keep up a succession of Bishops in Jerusalem, where assuredly Anglicanism has no ecclesiastical jurisdiction even according to its own theory. One would think that in Jerusalem the Anglican might manage to patch up some kind of understanding with the Greek schismatical patriarch who claims jurisdiction there—but the fact is the Greek patriarch will have nothing to do with Anglicanism.

MONSEIGNEUR SATOLLI'S ENLARGED POWERS.

The statement is made by the Right Rev. Bishop Keane, dean of the Catholic University of Washington, that a letter from the Holy Father to the Bishops of the United States will soon be forthcoming setting forth an enlargement of the functions, authority and dignity of Mgr. Satolli, the Pope's Delegate to the United States.

Many reports have been circulated from time to time since Mgr. Satolli's appointment as Apostolic Delegate, to the effect that the office would be abolished, and Mgr. Satolli recalled; but all such statements are positively declared to be without foundation, and the office is stated to be a permanent one.

The Holy Father is highly pleased with the manner in which his Delegate has fulfilled his important duties, and has given his unqualified approval of all the Delegate's decisions, as far as he has been made acquainted with them, and the proof of this is found in his determination to enlarge the Delegate's authority.

Bishop Keane has been on a visit to Rome on business connected with the new University over which he so ably presides, and has had many interviews with the Holy Father. He has just returned home, and he relates that the Pope has a wonderful amount of information as to the details of the work done by the Church in the United States.

In regard to the expected promotion of Mgr. Satolli to the Cardinalate, the Bishop stated a few days ago to a representative of the New York Herald that there is no doubt Mgr. Satolli will be made a Cardinal, but that it is impossible for any one but the Pope himself to say when this elevation will take place. It is not customary to elevate an ecclesiastical dignitary to the Cardinalate until the work is finished on account of which especially the promotion takes place, yet it is possible that in the case of Mgr. Satolli the elevation might be made sooner as he would be thus quite able to fulfil his duties as Apostolic Delegate.

In fact, on this question, when the Herald's representative asked whether the elevation of Mgr. Satolli to the Cardinalate might be simultaneous with the enlargement of his authority, the Bishop answered that such might be the case, though he could not say positively. There are at present twenty-two vacancies in the College of Cardinals, the number of Cardinals being now fifty-five, whereas the full number authorized is seventy-seven.

It is indubitable that Mgr. Satolli represents faithfully the views of the Holy Father on questions affecting the Church in America, and the Pope has the utmost confidence in him. So true is this that Bishop Keane says the increased authority which will be given to the Delegate will constitute him a supreme tribunal from which there will be no appeal on questions of canon law.

The Protestant press generally appear to be under the impression that the office of Mgr. Satolli makes him practically a Pope on this continent, and they frequently speak of him as "the American Pope." Bishop Keane explains that such a view of the situation is erroneous. He says: "The Supreme authority of the American Ablegate would extend to cases of disputes, and would be in the nature of a supreme court, subject, however, to the Papal power on all questions outside of those of Church discipline and procedure."

It is no new thing for the Pope to establish an Apostolic Delegation. This has been the custom for ages, though the name by which the representative of the Pope was called, varied; and even now in the Catholic countries of Europe there are frequently legates appointed by the Holy Father with various degrees of authority. In former times such legates exercised very high authority in those European countries which are now Protestant, and the appointment of

Mgr. Satolli was made for reasons similar to those which caused such appointments to be made in former ages, with the difference that the peculiar laws and Constitution of the United States makes the position of Mgr. Satolli to regard solely ecclesiastical matters, as he has not been appointed with any function to fulfil in relation to the United States Government.

Owing to the wonderful progress of the Church in America, and the importance of many questions of canon law which have been frequently cropping up, the establishment of the Apostolic Delegation was a necessity; the more especially as the distance of this continent from Europe rendered it extremely difficult to settle such questions satisfactorily. Thus a reliable representative of the Holy Father became a need of the Church in that country; and it was for this reason that Mgr. Satolli was so appointed; but even so, it is out of the power even of the Pope to transfer his own supreme authority, which is divinely associated with his office, to any representative; so that the talk of an American Pope, which is indulged in by some of the public journals, is in the highest degree absurd.

Notwithstanding the fact that in the beginning there was some opposition on the part of certain eminent ecclesiastical dignitaries to Mgr. Satolli's appointment, and even to the establishment of the office he fills, the manner in which he has performed his duties has given general satisfaction, even to those who offered the strongest opposition. It must be remarked, however, that such opposition did not in any case amount to rebellion against the authority of the Pope, though some newspapers seemed to be anxious to make it assume this character.

THE CONDEMNATION OF ZOLA'S BOOK.

The newspapers and monthly magazines have been busy for the last few weeks in discussing the effect of the Pope's condemnation of Emile Zola's new work on Lourdes.

The New York Herald seized the opportunity afforded it by the author of the book to publish it in its columns, and is, no doubt, well pleased with the amount of gratuitous advertising the work has received and is receiving through these magazine articles; but throughout nearly all of them runs the ludicrous error that Lourdes has been elevated into a dogma of Faith by the pronouncement of the Holy Father.

Zola went to Lourdes with the pretence that his intention was to discover the truth and afterwards publish it in realistic colors. The book has appeared; but as it was never expected by Catholics that such a writer as Zola would tell the plain truth concerning a sacred theme, the expectation which was really entertained, that it would be a parody, has been realized.

Zola could not be expected to make any other hypothesis than that the fame of Lourdes and of the miracles wrought there is merely the result of a money-making conspiracy, and this is the impression he desires to make by his new novel or romance—for a romance it is, notwithstanding the high pretence that he wrote with the desire of publishing the truth to the world.

To those who have followed even cursorily the history of Lourdes as a shrine of the Blessed Virgin, it will be impossible to doubt that an astonishing number of miraculous cures has taken place there; and these have been of every imaginable description.

It might be thought that these wonders could have been effected by physicians or the use of medicine, but the fact is that in most of the instances of cure, medical skill had been baffled, though all the resources of medicine had been tried before the effect of the water of the miraculous spring at Lourdes had been tested at all.

Yet the miracles of Lourdes are by no means a matter of Catholic faith, and the condemnation of Zola's book is not at all to be regarded as elevating them to the rank of Catholic dogmas, as the non-Catholic press of this continent and Europe have very generally stated to be the case, on the authority of some newspaper correspondent at Paris.

The Holy Father by condemning Zola's work condemns the false principles which lurk in the book. There is the limiting of the power of God when Zola lays it down as a principle that all supposed miraculous interventions are to be regarded as impostures. It is also quite within the province of the Holy Father to issue judgment against a book which distorts facts or history in such a way as to do injury

to religion. This is done by Zola's book on Lourdes, but it does not follow from the condemnation of such conduct, that all or any one of the miracles wrought at Lourdes is a matter of Faith. Books or writings of any kind may be condemned, even when there is nothing directly against Faith in them, and such condemnations have been frequently issued because the purpose of the book was bad; but in the case of Zola's book there is plenty to deserve condemnation even independently of its misrepresentations of the circumstances under which miracles have been wrought at Lourdes.

It would be out of place for us to decide dogmatically on the truth or falsity of the reports of any of the miracles in detail which have been wrought at Lourdes, before examination into them by the proper ecclesiastical tribunals, and we shall not do so; but we can say that the historical evidence of many of them places them beyond reasonable contradiction. They are to be judged of as other historical events; and if they are attested by witnesses who are not deceivers nor deceived, they become established as truths beyond reasonable doubt, even though they are not thus rendered a part of the Catholic faith. These miracles have been wrought, not only for Frenchmen or women, but for pious visitors from all parts of the world to the holy shrine, even for Americans; and it has been our privilege to meet and converse with some in whose favor they have been wrought.

Zola's book has not even the pretence of being an actual history of events. It is an essentially a work of fiction as the novels of Eugene Sue or Alexander Dumas; and, like these authors, Zola sacrifices truth to his desire for making money. With this object in view he parodies the history of Lourdes from the beginning, and thus casts, or endeavors to cast, ridicule on religion.

In this connection we may appropriately mention a recent statement made by Father Marie-Antoine, the celebrated Capuchin, well known in France as an ardent propagator of the devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

This Rev. Father says, in reference to scenes witnessed at Lourdes by himself while Zola was near him:

"Sights capable of melting the rocks into tenderness, M. Zola alone has failed to understand. Instead, he has sunk into the mire of mud and money. Woe to him who comes to Lourdes without his seeking the Lord! I said to Zola one day, close to the grotto, 'Beware of rejecting the grace that is given to you: Lourdes is a vision of heaven. There the eyes see what man has never seen, the ear hears what man has never heard, and the heart feels what man has never felt. To come to Lourdes is a grace unto salvation. Take care that this grace does not turn to your own destruction. The rock of Lourdes is one that smites if it does not sanctify. Now is the time of your ascent, or of your fall.' The unhappy Zola failed to understand, and he sold himself to the Gil Blas newspaper! Woe, thrice woe to him who sells his pen to Satan and to man."

Zola has declared that it is now his intention to publish next a book which will be entitled "Rome," and that for this purpose he will soon make a long visit to Rome and seek an audience with the Pope. He declares that in writing "Lourdes," he wrote only what he believed to be true; and it is said that he is rejoicing over the advertisement which the Pope has given to him.

We have no doubt that he is glad to get notoriety in any form, as this will endeavor him to those who hate religion, and it is through such notoriety of evil that he expects his books to be read. It is none the less true that the good shepherd must warn his flock against the noxious pastures of bad books, and the destruction of those who heed not the warning of the shepherd will be upon their own heads.

Zola's first popularity as a novelist arose out of the extreme filthiness of his writing, and nothing good is to be expected from his pen now. It is not at all likely that he will be granted the desired interview with Pope Leo XIII., though we may presume he will carry out his design of writing on Rome. But the purchasers of his foul books will not be those who desire to know the truth, but those who revel in filth. It is said that Zola's writings have not even the recommendation of being meritorious from a literary point of view; but they bring in money—filthy lucre—to the writer, and this is all that he aims at.

The Catholic press of Portugal have started a movement to celebrate with extraordinary pomp the seventh centenary of St. Anthony of Padua, who was born in Lisbon, 1195.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Congregation of Cardinals having in charge the questions which concern the Church in the East is preparing a programme of matters to be discussed when the Oriental Catholic Patriarchs will visit Rome in October for the purpose of taking steps to facilitate the return of the Eastern schismatics to Catholic unity. Negotiations for the bringing about this reunion of Orientals are being vigorously pushed on, and the prospect of their success is encouraging.

Premier Crispi's Venetian speech does not appear to give promise of reconciliation between the Pope and the Italian Government. It is still said that Crispi is inclined to make any concession to the Church, provided the Holy Father will consent to the present position of subjection to the Italian Government, but, as he is not likely to do this, it is probable the status quo will be still preserved.

BECAUSE an elected sheriff in Texas runs a faro table Ontario is urged not to elect its county officers. No doubt the sheriff in question reflects the morals and sentiments of the people he represents. Those who believe that such a man could secure office in Ontario by a popular vote have a poor opinion of the people of this province. —Toronto Mail, 24th Sept.

The Mail is evidently looking for new alliances or it would not have inserted the above among its editorial notes. But what kind of an opinion must the Mail have of the people of Ontario when after all its advices to them to elect P. P. A. candidates at the June elections, it only succeeded in persuading two constituencies to accept its platform pure and simple? Surely Ontario must be in a bad plight in the Mail's estimation. It may be good policy to laud Ontario when it suits its private interest, but it is bad logic to be so profuse in compliment when the difference in opinion between the Mail and the Ontario electors is so great.

DIOCESE OF HAMILTON.

OCTOBER DEVOTIONS.

The following circular was read in all the churches of the diocese on Sunday last, by order of the Bishop: To the Reverend Clergy of the Diocese of Hamilton:

Reverend and Dear Father—As the month of the Holy Rosary is approaching, I desire to call your attention, and that of your flock, to the devotions directed to be observed by the Holy See every year, during the month of October. This is all the more necessary, inasmuch as there has been in the past some misunderstanding as to the nature and obligations of these devotions, and as to the time and manner in which they are to be performed.

As it is desirable that there should be uniformity in the practice of these devotions, and that the faithful should know the many spiritual advantages to be derived therefrom, I think it my duty as chief pastor of the diocese, to point out what the Holy See teaches and requires in relation to them. On September 1, 1883, the Sovereign Pontiff issued an Encyclical in which he exhorts the faithful of the entire world to fervent prayer, and the assiduous practice of those virtues of which the Blessed Mother of our Divine Saviour is not only the highest expression among creatures, but of which she, now reigning in heaven, is the fosterer and protectress. As the devout practice of the time-honored prayer known as the Rosary is one of the surest methods for gaining this end, and as the present needs of the Church call for special and united prayer, the Holy Father directs that the devotions of the Holy Rosary be revived among the faithful.

The month of October, therefore, is set apart for daily public prayer to the Queen of the Most Holy Rosary as a time most opportune to explain to the faithful the beautiful meaning, and to recite with more than ordinary solemnity the prayer of the Rosary.

In the year 1885, the Holy Father prescribed that the October devotions should be continued as at first established, until the liberties of the Church were fully restored to her, in the freedom and full exercise of lawful jurisdiction of her Sovereign Pontiff. Hence the October devotions are of obligation until the freedom of the Holy See is secured.

The devotions are to be as follows: "From the first day of October to the second day of November following, five decades of the Rosary and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin shall be daily recited in all parochial churches and in public chapels dedicated to the Mother of God, and in all such chapels as the ordinary may designate."

If these devotions take place in the morning, the prayers are to be said during the Mass; if in the afternoon or evening, the Blessed Sacrament is to be exposed and the Rosary, Litany and Prayer to St. Joseph to be recited in the presence of the Most Holy Sacrament. Benediction follows with the usual ceremonies.

For those who live in the country and are during the month of October engaged in harvesting, by special faculties of the Holy See, I grant permission to postpone the devotion to

November or December, with the same privilege as granted in the month of October.

In churches or oratories having, on account of poverty, no Remonstrance, Benediction may be given with the Ciborium, which by special privilege, during these devotions, may be taken out of the tabernacle, and Benediction given with it to the people.

INDULGENCES ATTACHED TO THE DEVOUT PERFORMANCE OF THE ABOVE EXERCISES.

All who are present at the public recital of the Rosary, or who, if reasonably prevented, recite the same in private, gain an Indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines each time.

All who assist at these devotions in public at least ten times, or, if lawfully hindered, perform the same as often in private, gain a Plenary Indulgence, provided they receive the sacraments of penance and holy Eucharist worthily during that time. Those who receive these sacraments on the feast of the Holy Rosary, or within the octave, likewise gain a Plenary Indulgence. To obtain these Indulgences the usual condition is to pray according to the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff.

THE ROSARY ON SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS.

On the eve of Christmas, 1883, the Holy Father issued a Brief in which he prescribes that in the Litany of Loretto, after the invocation (Queen conceived without original sin) shall be added the prayer, "Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, Pray for us." In this Brief the following passage occurs: "We exhort and beseech all to persist religiously and constantly in the custom of daily reciting the Rosary; and we declare it to be our wish that in the principal church (Cathedral) of each diocese it should be recited every day, and in the parish churches every Sunday and festival day."

For the greater glory of God, the honor of our Blessed Mother and the edification of the faithful, it is my most earnest desire that every pastor of a diocese, during the coming month of October, should deliver on the occasion of the prescribed devotions, short and instructive discourses on the origin and advantages of the Holy Rosary, on its adaptability to every age and class and condition of life, in its admirable twofold form of mental and vocal prayer, dwelling finally in detail, and portraying as so many precious pictures each in succession of the several mysteries of joy, of sorrow, and of glory connected with the life of our Divine Lord and His Blessed Mother, together with the practical lessons to be derived therefrom.

I have also to call your attention and that of your flock to the annual collection in aid of ecclesiastical education, which, in accordance with the diocesan regulations, is to be taken up every year on the first Sunday of October. Here is an opportunity offered to each member of the congregation to assist in the good work of educating students for the priesthood. The necessity and advantages of good works are clearly inculcated in the Holy Scriptures, especially by St. James (Chap. II.) who says: "What shall it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but hath not works? Shall faith be able to save him? Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead. Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works, offering up Isaac, his son, upon the altar? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead." And what work can be more pleasing to Almighty God than that in which our Divine Lord Jesus Christ was specially engaged for the last three years of His life on earth, namely, the training and forming of the minds and hearts of men specially chosen for the office of the priesthood? We read that besides the Apostles who were His constant companions, He also selected seventy-two disciples, and that "He sent them two and two before His face, and into every city and place, whither He himself was to come. And He said to them, the harvest indeed is great but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He send laborers into His harvest." (St. Luke, x., 1-2.)

So also it may be said of the Church in this Province of Ontario: "The harvest indeed is great and the laborers are few." To supply faithful laborers in the vineyard of the Lord, is my object in appealing to priests and people to assist me in the good work of educating students for the ministry, a work I believe to be specially dear to the Sacred Heart of our Divine Lord and to the immaculate heart of His blessed mother, who sacrificed her only son as priest and victim on the cross for the salvation of the world.

It is a work also highly pleasing to our Holy Father Pope Leo XIII., who was pleased to give it his special approval and blessing, and authorized me for this purpose to assess the several missions in proportion to population. I hope and pray also that some good benefactors may be found in the diocese who will found a scholarship for the education of a student in our diocesan college at Berlin, or at the Grand Seminary in Montreal, in both of which institutions there is at present a very large number of students studying for the diocese. We have, besides, a classical school in the city of Hamilton, with an ever-increasing attendance of younger students. This classical school shall henceforth be free, and all expenses connected with it shall be paid out of the collections taken in the city churches.

This collection shall be taken up on next Sunday (Feast of the Holy Rosary), and every year on the same festi-