

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname).—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

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EDITOR BRANN ON SUPERNAL VISIONS.

A Freethinker's Interesting Chapter on "Catholic vs. Protestant Cranks."

From the July number of *Brann's Iconoclast* we take the following: An unknown correspondent clips from the press a rather sensational account of the supposed appearance of the Holy Virgin to Louis Palliniere at Tilly-sur-Seulles, together with the pilgrimages to the spot, and sends it to the *Iconoclast* with the following comment and query:

"About once a year the Catholics run off after some such crank, thereby bringing religion into contempt and creating a bad impression on the minds of the people. Why don't you turn your iconoclastic batteries loose on this *fol-de-rol*? What is your opinion of people who countenance such idiocies?"

The man who writes a letter reflecting upon the sanity or honesty of a numerous and patriotic body of American people should have the moral courage to either sign his screed or burn it. An anonymous "roast" is a cowardly stab in the dark. Publishers do well to waste basket such communications as being the emanations of irresponsible people who will say more in a minute than they will stand for in a month. However, as my correspondent has touched upon a subject of interest to many people, I will, in this instance, waive the rule applying to anonymity. Frankly, I think but little of miracles, ancient or modern, and regard supernatural appearances as but the idiosyncrasies of religious neuropathics. Mlle. Palliniere's vision of the Virgin was, in my opinion, but a day-dream, the fond imaginings of a maid with whom religion had become a monomania, her fervor an ecstasy bordering on delirium. Still, I realize that there may be more things in this world than I have dreamed of in my philosophy. In dealing with the supernatural, as with all things else, it is well to bear in mind the apothegm of Seneca, to the effect that "many persons would have attained to wisdom if they had not presumed that they already possessed it."

If the age of the miraculous, of angelic visitations ever began, we have a special reason for believing that it has come to an end. It is certainly no more remarkable that the Lord should reveal Himself to St. Theresa and the Virgin to the maid of Tilly-sur-Seulles than that Jacob should wrestle with an angel and Jehovah speak to Moses from the burning bush. If there was ever a time in the world's history when something more than the written law becomes necessary to fix mankind's faltering faith, that time is even now. The man who scoffs at St. Theresa's visions yet accuses unfalteringly the inerrancy of the Bible, strains at a diatom and swallows an entire drove of dromedaries. There are various reasons why the *Iconoclast* does not align its guns upon these so-called supernatural visions. I am not aware that they are doing the world any serious damage, and the *Iconoclast* assails only those things which it believes to be really detrimental.

Furthermore, to brand all such visionaries as "cranks" and those who countenance them as "idiots" were to vilipend the corypheus of the Reformation and deride the Protestant faith. If all who dream dreams and see visions; if all who profess to have seen the supernatural be written down as purveyors of ridiculous *fol-de-rol* what is to become of our beloved Luther and his co-laborers? It was not the magic mirror which St. Theresa saw; nor the Archangel Gabriel in *Rue de Paradis*, nor the Virgin Mother standing beneath an elm in the canton of Calvados that Luther witnessed; such visitations were entirely too tame for the good man who denounced the Zwinglians as "damned fools and blasphemers," insulted the learned Erasmus, called the doctors of Louvain "beasts, pigs and pagans," incited the people to assassinate the Pope, and otherwise displayed that vigor and virulence which drew after him all the chronic kickers of Christendom.

Luther's supernatural visitor was invariably the devil, and these two worthies usually made it hot for each other. The prince of darkness appears to have gotten the best of the controversies, for Luther himself assures us that Satan by his arguments compelled him to make an important alteration in divine services; also that on another occasion his infamandane visitor worsted him in a debate and so terrified him by his voice that he was in danger of death. Zwinglians, the father of Protestantism in Switzerland, relates that when about to be turned down in a religious disputation a black phantom appeared and helped him out of the hole. Whether this was the same party that amended Luther's creed we are not informed. Nor has this unhappy faculty of seeing the devil yet been lost by Protestant divines. Entering a Protestant church some years ago at Tipton, Iowa, I was surprised to see the pastor engaged in an exparte dispute with an invisible person. He shook his fist and declared that he would pray despite all the powers of hell. And pray he did. After advising the Lord re-

garding a number of things of which he was supposed to have no knowledge, and telling Him exactly how to manage the universe, he informed us that the devil had come up to the pulpit and warned him not to call upon the name of the Lord. The name of this wonderful sight-seer was Crisman. At Ashton, Ill., a good old Protestant lady assured me that upon going into her cellar one day she was confronted by Satan; that she fell upon her knees in prayer and he disappeared. As she was noted for the excellence of her *sauer kraut* I have always suspected that the prince of darkness was on a foraging expedition. It were easy to cite hundreds of such visions, related by Protestants, since the days of Luther. There is, however, a marked difference between Protestants and Catholics in this respect. While the former usually see the devil, the latter content themselves with visions of the Lord or Virgin. Why this is so, I know not; but, as a good Protestant, the fact gives me ineffable pain. Some of those terrible Jesuits are liable to suggest that angels and demons, like men and women, usually visit those most in sympathy with themselves. Another remarkable fact which may well give us pause is that, while the religious ecstasies of the Catholics are usually conducive to peace on earth and good-will to men, those of their Protestant brethren are almost invariably trouble-breeds. It does no particular harm for a maid to get the idea into her head that she has seen the Virgin Mother; but John of Leyden proclaiming himself King of Zion, marrying seventeen wives and authorizing most brutal murders, is quite another matter. David George asserted that he was the Son of God; Hermann waged the massacre of all magistrates; Hackett declared himself to be Christ; Johanna Southcote issued passports to heaven, while scores of others indulged in vagaries equally fantastic or dangerous. It must be remembered that these people were not only Protestants, but commanded considerable following; that many of them demanded and received the worship of latria, which the most enthusiastic Catholics have ever withheld from their Popes and saints. True, Luther did not sanction the fierce fanaticism and egotistical folly of the Anabaptists; but he was none the less responsible for his revolt against authority, of the doctrine—which is the basal principle of Protestantism—that each individual possesses an inalienable right to put such interpretation upon the Scriptures as he may please.

Protestantism has, from its inception, been the unwilling wet-nurse of infidelity. Luther did not propagate it than did the alleged moral laches of the worst of Popes, the sacred relics that have been subjected to so much ridicule, the modern miracles, the doctrine of Papal infallibility and so-called "sale of Indulgences." The Catholic Church is based upon authority, whether real or assumed. I shall not here pretend to say. It insists that it is the chosen savior and divinely ordained exegesis of Christian dogma. We may decline to admit this claim; but we cannot deny that it was the sheet anchor of Europe for a thousand years; the lone rock upon which Vandal and Visigoth beat in vain; the rallying point for a society otherwise hopelessly wrecked. In politics, art, science, letters, there was chaos; but amid it the Roman Catholic Church stood immutable as a granite mountain. Suppose that it had faltered; had stopped to argue; had declared that it believed instead of declaring that it knew; had implored instead of commanding. Every student of history knows what would have happened—the Christian religion would have perished utterly and Luther's revolt been against the *Immal* of Islam. This authority once overturned throughout a large portion of Europe, the wildest excesses followed. Ignorant and violent men became the founders of sects, whose ridiculous doctrines and unseemly orgies disgusted thinking men with the very name of religion. Atheism and Protestantism developed side by side, the scholar following the gonolam of the first, the ignoramus trailing blindly in the wake of the last. A few learned men of well-balanced minds embraced Protestantism in its infancy; but almost without exception they drifted into the camp of doubt or returned to the Catholic Church.

It is impossible to find during the first century of the Reformation one master mind which it caught and held. Even Melancthon, the beloved disciple of Luther and by all odds the ablest of the early reformers, declared that he felt "like Daniel in the lion's den," and was "tempted to take flight." Nor is this all. While the Catholic Church has ever asserted its position and proclaimed its doctrine as those regarding whose truth there could be no doubt, the great Protestant divines have seldom been willing to accept the inevitable sequence of the dogmas they were employed to preach. Professing one thing, they have proclaimed another or dodged the issue altogether. Beecher's lecture on evolution is a case in point, being almost as materialistic as even Ingersoll could ask. But it is

not alone in these decadent days that we find doubt among the Protestant divines. Luther himself declared that he did not know whether he taught the truth or not, and freely admitted that he could not prevail upon himself to believe what he taught to others! (The first of the foregoing statements we have on the authority of Luther himself, the latter on the testimony of his biographer, John Machet.) How is that for a *soldat* reformer and founder of a new faith—for one who separated from the Church of Rome because, as he assumes, it had become false? It is somewhat remarkable that, while admitting his doubts, Luther should have declared: "It is certain that I received my dogmas from heaven. I will not allow you to judge of my doctrine, neither you nor the angels in heaven." Yet, as he foretold, individual liberty of biblical interpretation was the basic principle of Protestantism!

Is it any wonder, in view of these inconsistencies—not to say absurdities—of the prime mover of the Reformation, that Protestantism should be to day a mere jumble of contradictions, which repels men of analytical minds and leaves them to choose between Catholicity, deism and infidelity? Doubtless there were atheists in the world before the Reformation, before the inauguration of the Christian era, but there were few in Europe until Luther began to preach toleration while persecuting, to demand abject submission to dogmas which he himself doubted. The Catholic Church had to deal with many schismatics before the Reformation, but it was reserved for Protestantism to wage a war of extermination on avowed atheists—Cronus devouring his own children. The learned Galet was the first "infidel serpent" to be strangled by the infant Hercules. His offense was greater even than that of Servetus—he not only disagreed with Calvin, but he avowed "toleration," but had the audacity to criticize him! Theodore Beza, contemporary of Luther and Calvin, and apostle of the Reformation in France, makes a declaration which proves that the Protestant leopard has not changed its spots during the past three centuries—that it was the same provocative of infidelity at its birth that it is to-day. "On what point of religion (he plaintively asks) are the Churches which have declared war against the Pope agreed? Exchangeable, from beginning to end, and you will hardly find one thing affirmed by the one which the other does not directly cry out against as impious."

THE ATTEMPTS TO SETTLE THE IRISH UNIVERSITY QUESTION have resulted for the present in the foundation of the Royal University of Ireland, which is an exciting body in Dublin, with a system of affiliated colleges throughout the country where candidates for examination study. But where is the university where Catholics may or will study? And surely, as Mr. Matthew Arnold said when speaking of this matter, the object is to provide means of study that will be taken advantage of. It is useless to legislate for imaginary or abstract beings without such and such beliefs, customs or prejudices.

The Archbishop of Dublin says: "The Bishops, as the responsible guardians of the religious interests of the Catholics of Ireland, have put forward a definite claim for equality as regards all the privileges and immunities enjoyed by the Queen's colleges or by Trinity College. The object is the education of the people. The means must be, as Burke tried to teach rulers in his day, by understanding and acknowledging people's ideas, circumstances, and even prejudices."

ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE CHURCH.

If Leo XIII. had penned only the majestic encyclical which we publish the first part of this year, this alone would serve to make his reign memorable in the history of the Church. The Pontiff's hand has lifted the great question of Christian unity above all petty, ephemeral controversy into the clear atmosphere of faith, history and reason. No Catholic who would have a ground for the faith that is in him can refuse to give this encyclical his earnest study; no non-Catholic who desires the realization of the unity of mankind in Christ can fail to be mightily influenced by this most cogent exposition of the true meaning and character of Christian unity. There is not a sentence in it which an ordinary intelligence cannot grasp, nor is there one which could be omitted without loss. The synopsis already published, though admirable in its way, gives no adequate conception of Pope Leo's comprehensive treatment of his great subject. His subject, indeed, it is in a special sense. Those who are in closer relationship with the Holy Father declare that the thought of the reunion of Christendom is continually present with him, and we can well believe it after this last pronouncement.

It is to be feared that many outside the Church have approached the question with views either utterly vague or radically false. Theories were being entertained that the desired unity might be effected not by removing but by overlooking the differences existing between religious bodies, or that some system of compromise might be reached by which non-Catholics would consent to adopt certain doctrines and Catholics drop certain others. The encyclical has dispelled all such delusive mirages. The unity which Christ enjoined and which the Catholic Church has always insisted upon is the acceptance of every truth taught by Jesus Christ and His Apostles, and handed down, in all its integrity and purity, by an infallible Church, of which Peter and his successors are the inflexible head. This unity admits of no compromise, and the Church "in Leo's words, "founded on these principles and mindful of her office has done nothing with greater zeal and endeavor than she has displayed in guarding the integrity of the faith."

What the effect of this encyclical will be time alone can tell. But this much may be said without fear of contradiction: All who are willing to follow the grace of God and the light of reason will recognize that Pope Leo's words have shone off many misleading paths and made the true road to unity more plainly visible.—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

THE HOLY FATHER EXPLAINS ITS IMPORT AT A RECENT CONSISTORY.

His Holiness Leo XIII., speaking at the sacred consistory on June 22, delivered the following allocution: Venerable Brothers—Our duty moving us to provide for vacant churches and to fill up your college, we desire to premise some remarks respecting a project of ours, which seems likely to be of little importance in the interests of Christianity. Never was zeal wanting to mother church in recalling and inviting those whom difference of opinion or mental error had with dissonance and of late years, upon occasions of which you are well aware, the Church has pursued the same object with increased earnestness. We can now in some measure see pledges of the desired fruit, which nourish hope and stimulate to the achievement of the end in view, especially as among different peoples everywhere there are growing indications of no obscure kind which seem to show that men's minds are turning to her with good will and are looking towards the See of Peter not without a longing for the restoration of the ancient connection. If, after having before God given much thought to these matters, we have

under the guidance of apostolic charity, undertaken and accomplished anything in the cause, we are most anxious that by exposition and action much greater help could be afforded to those who seek Christ in truth.

And since the main points, and, as it were, the foundation of the Christian doctrine is contained in a genuine knowledge of the Church, we have, therefore, applied ourselves to setting forth the image and form of the Church as expressed by its divine constitution, desiring to bring more clearly into light its admirable mark of unity. Certainly in the case of those who closely look at and examine the Church as the Divine Founder would it be to be handed it to the apostles, as the Holy Fathers and doctors through the East and the West constantly preserved it, and as monuments of every kind from remote antiquity prove it to have been, it is necessary that they should aim at a twofold object—on the one hand, that dissidents should receive a stimulus and the light useful for unity, and on the other hand, that those who share such a blessing should esteem it more highly and betray increased zeal in their appreciation of it. We are just now by addressing an encyclical letter to all the bishops, and we are happy to be able to place this document under the auspices of the blessed princes of the apostles, Peter and Paul, by whose precepts, labors and blood the beginners of the Church, the bride of Christ, were gloriously consecrated. After these few words, venerable brethren we turn to you. We have deemed worthy of the honor of being members of it some men distinguished by high qualities and abilities who proved to the Holy See their sagacity, faith and devoted good will.

His Holiness then names as cardinals the four nuncios, Monsignors Jacolina, Agliardi, Ferrata and Cretoni, and adds that he has created two other who are reserved in petto.

ON THE DOME OF ST. PETERS.

Almost a Panorama of the World Stretched Before the Beholder.

The strangest, most extravagant, most incomprehensible, most disturbing sight of all is to be seen from the upper gallery in the cupola looking down to the church below. Hanging in mid air, with nothing under one's feet, one sees the church projected in perspective within a huge circle. It is as though one saw it upside down and inside out. Few men could bear to stand there without that bit of iron railing between them and the hideous fall, and the inevitable slight dizziness which the strongest head feels may make one doubt for a moment whether what is really the floor below may not be in reality a ceiling above, and whether one's sense of gravitation be not inverted in an extraordinary dream. At that distance human beings look no bigger than flies, and the canopy of the high altar might be an ordinary table.

And thence, climbing up between the dome's domes, one may emerge from the almost terrible perspective of the open air, and suddenly see all Rome at one's feet, and all the Roman mountains stretched out to south and east, in perfect grace of restful outline, slender to shoulder, like shadowy human lying side by side and holding hands.

And the broken symmetry of streets and squares ranges below, cut by the winding ribbon of the yellow Tiber; to the right the low Aventine, with the dark expresses of the Protestant cemetery beyond, and the Palestine, crested with trees and ruins; the Pincian on the left, with its high gardens, and the mass of foliage of the Villa Medici behind it; the lofty tower of the Capitol in the midst of the city; and the sun clasping all to its heart of gold, the just and the unjust, the new and the old alike, past and present, youth, age and decay—generous as only the sun can be in this sordid and miserly world, where bread is but another name for blood, and a rood of growing corn means a pound of human flesh. The sun is the only good thing in nature that always gives itself to man for nothing but the mere trouble of sitting in the sunshine, and Rome without sunlight is a very grim and gloomy town to-day.

It is worth the effort of climbing so high. Four hundred feet in the air, you look down on what ruled half the world by force for ages, and on what rules the other half to-day by faith—the greatest center of conquest and of discord since the religion which the world has ever seen. A thousand volumes have been written about it by a thousand wise men. A word will tell what it has been—the heart of the world. Hither was drawn the world's blood by all the roads that lead to Rome, and hence it was forced out again along the mighty arteries of the Caesars' roads to be spilled in the Caesars' battles to redden the world with the Roman name. Blood, blood and more blood—that was the history of old Rome—the blood of brothers, the blood of foes, the blood of martyrs without end. It flowed and ebbed in varying tide at the will of the just and the unjust, but there was always more to shed, and there were always more hands to shed

it. And so it may be again hereafter; for the name of Rome has a heart-stirring ring, and there has always been as much blood spilled for the names of things as for the things themselves.—"St. Peter's," by Marion Crawford, in the Century for July.

AN INDIAN SISTERHOOD.

The Progressive Influence of Leo XIII. Has Wrought Good in Unexpected Quarters.

One of the most gratifying of American tributes to Leo XIII. must be contained in the following letter from Elbow Woods, North Dakota, which has appeared in the columns of the *Roman Post*:

"The reverend priestess general and all her sisters are of the tribes of Dakotas, Chippewas, Arickaras, Gros Ventres and Mandans. Their existence and history will, no doubt, interest your readers, as theirs is the first religious congregation of American Indians in the history of the Church and its missions. Moreover, the success of their congregation has finally settled the question, so long in dispute, as to whether it were possible for Indians of the first generation to step from barbarism to the highest civilization.

"For four centuries the Indians have been very anxious to have priests and Sisters of their own race. In their own tribal organization they had orders of 'Sacred Virgins.' Their religious and philosophical systems had given them a moral and mental development which enabled them to understand and follow at once, with proper training, the Christian precepts and counsels. Missionaries did not understand this, nor did they believe that the wish of the Indians could be readily, if indeed ever, realized.

"When the Indians were informed of the progressive policy of Leo XIII., an Indian girl, Sacred White Buffalo, the chief Sacred Virgin of the Dakota Confederation, born in the Dakota war camp, but educated in a convent school, felt there was at last some hope for her race and wished to found a congregation of Sisters to carry out the policy of the Holy Father. She applied to Rev. Francis M. J. Craft of Fort Berthold, North Dakota, for assistance. With his aid she was enabled to send her candidates to a convent school. After passing through a novitiate she made her religious profession. In religion she took the name of Sister Catharine.

"In a war which broke out between the Indians and the troops Father Craft was wounded, and it was believed, mortally, at the battle of Wounded Knee Creek. An attempt was then made to send the candidates back to the Indian camp, but fortunately Father Craft was enabled to leave the hospital and reach the convent in time to prevent it. Sister Catharine then came with her candidates to Fort Berthold Indian Agency, founded her congregation and became the first priestess general. In May, 1883, she died before the altar in the chapel of the convent after receiving the Papal benediction through His Eminence Cardinal Satolli.

"The Congregation of American Sisters is now regarded as the most progressive religious congregation in America.

"The success of the sisters is due in part to their heroic perseverance under the severest hardships and tribulations, but chiefly to the enlightened policy of the Holy Father, which has reached even to the wild tribes of western America and has enabled the Indians to do at once what the Christian missionaries had been unable to do or had considered impossible during four centuries."

There is something almost miraculous in this wonderful fact, which reveals to the world that the progressive influence of Leo XIII. has wrought great good in such unexpected quarters.

Cardinal Satolli Says.

The *Freeman's Journal* has information from a trustworthy source that the Holy Father has given Cardinal Satolli his choice of returning to Rome or remaining in America, and that His Eminence has elected to remain. We feel justified in publishing the news, as our informant has been invariably accurate in the past, but we do so with all the reserve that must attach to his unofficial character. If the universal wish were father to the fact, Cardinal Satolli would certainly remain many years longer in our midst. His personality has become so potent a factor in the life and polity of American Catholicism that his departure would cause a void, almost impossible to fill. Indeed, there are vast numbers outside the Church who have unconsciously come to regard him almost as an American institution. He has made a successor's task at once simple and difficult—simple by the solution of many grave difficulties, difficult by that high standard he has set for anybody who may succeed him in his high office. His continued presence will be another proof of the love which he and his august master have for America.—N. Y. Freeman's Journal July 25.

Unless thou do violence to thyself, thou wilt not overcome vice.—The Imitation.

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