

DEFENDS THE RED MEN.

Rev. Father Craft Explains the Position of the Indians.

Mistreated by the Whites—They Do Not Want to Fight—The Messiah Story—Reports from the Northwest Greatly Exaggerated.

Reports of Indian disturbances in the Northwest are of such frequent occurrence and almost in every instance turn out to be purely canard or so greatly exaggerated that people in the East place little reliance in them. Rev. Francis Craft, who has faithfully toiled among the redmen in the Northwest for a number of years and has done as much as any one man to civilize the Indians is about as good authority on the Indian question as could be found. He came East some time ago to secure the further aid of his Church in his labors in the Northwest, and a few days ago expressed his views on the Messiah craze to the New York "Freeman's Journal."

"I have been for ten years," said Father Craft, "a missionary among the Indians of the Northwest—the Kalispels, Pen d'Orielle, Nez Percés, Blackfeet, Crows, Dakotas, Aricharees, Gros Ventres, Mandans and others, and can safely say that, on the part of Indians themselves there is not the least desire for war, but the whites in and near the Indian country would like, very much, to mislead and goad the Indians into some act that would seem to verify the charges they make against them for their own purposes. The Indians, however, know this, and have sense enough not to be used as catspaws, and as the officers of the army also know it, they will not allow the Indians to be tormented and persecuted beyond the limit of human endurance. Unless the whites make war on the Indians there will be no war."

Speaking directly of the Messiah craze, Father Craft said: "About a year ago some Indians said they saw the 'Son of the Great Spirit' on the Pacific coast. He consoled them in their troubles, gave them good advice, and promised that at his second coming, at the end of the world, he would make a new heaven and a new earth, and would reward those Indians who were patient under trials, and would punish their persecutors. They understood that what he said related to the future and not to this life. They told their people, and the Indians were consoled but not excited. The supposed visit of the Messiah disposed them to peace rather than to war.

"I was among the Indians and talked with them about it, and would have known if there was the least excitement. They even agreed with me that the appearance of the Messiah was a question of evidence, and they called on the Indians who claimed to have seen him to prove it before they would believe it. They said that they had feared that even God had forgotten them, but felt much consoled by the hope that He had come to promise them in Heaven the justice denied them on earth. But while they are anxious to believe they thought I was right in advising them to trust to the guidance of their missionaries, and to demand better evidence of the apparition before accepting too hastily a statement that might put them in the position of crazy enthusiasts. This was their view of the case, and if left alone by the whites it is probable that the greater number of the Indians would have suspended their judgment in the matter, while the few who believed would have consoled themselves with a belief that is no worse than the belief of those whites who now expect the 'Second Advent' in the near future. Recently, owing to the delay of appropriations by Congress and the consequent delay of Indian supplies, the Indians were suffering from starvation. They, of course, were anxious and discontented, but did not think of fighting. If we know how foolish it would be for them to begin a winter campaign, they surely know it even better. Nothing was said about preparing for war. But now comes the real cause of the reports we have heard about Indian wars and rumors of wars. The whites saw a favorable opportunity to raise an excitement for their own purposes. Indian Agents wanted to show that Indians were as wild as ever, and wanted also to show their ability to control them, that their importance might be proved and the continuance of their positions and salaries assured. Many of the Indians were getting so near civilization by their own efforts as to make agents fear that the transition state might end, and with it would end their positions and salaries. Something had to be done.

The whites, also, in and near the Indian country, saw a chance to make money by getting troops into their vicinity that they might make something by freighting supplies, trading, and by the different chances that the presence of a large military force always brings. The towns along the frontier, still and dead after too many booms,

wanted garrisons near them, and saw now a chance to get them by renewing the 'Indian scares' they had so often attempted for the same purpose. Therefore the Indian agents sent in alarming reports of dangers, which they attributed to the 'Messiah craze.' The whites on the reserves lent their aid to confirm them, and joined with the people of the towns to raise false alarms, and the good citizens of the towns raised a panic and fairly holed for troops and arms. As we see by General Miles' reports, the whites called for troops, and then excited the Indians by misrepresenting the intentions of the army. The Indians had more sense than white men would have shown under such provocation; they remained quiet, and let the white savages do the howling and whooping and arming, and thus proved that the whites, and not the Indians, were on the war path.

"If Eastern people fear trouble from the Indian Messiah, what have they to say about the late reports of the 'Second Adventists' about the coming of the white Messiah. The long list of crimes among whites given by our daily papers—crimes unknown among Indians, together with the religious excitement now prevalent among whites, might indicate the necessity of calling the troops from the West to control the whites in the East.

"As to the Indian ghost dance," Father Craft said,

"I know all the Indian customs, and I know that there never was among the Northwestern Indians a dance called the 'ghost dance.' Nothing, it will be noticed, was heard of any dancing connected with the Messiah affair until very lately. Indians have always used their dances as meetings to get the people together for other purposes, and it is probable that they talked over the Messiah affair in such meetings, and it may be that those anxious to believe in the apparition, have prepared a special dance in honor of the Messiah; but what I saw at the reservations, and letters sent me by Indians and others since I have been here, would lead to the belief that the conduct of the whites in attaching so much importance to the Messiah affair has made some of the Indians more enthusiastic about it than they would have been if left alone. In view of the Indians' own statements, I can't see why a dance in any way connected with the Messiah should be called a 'ghost dance.' All these reports have come from whites who do not understand Indians and their customs, and such reports must always be far from correct."

The Augustinian Nuns.

While public opinion, Dr. Despres, and a few leading minds are fighting manfully for the Augustinian Nuns of the Hotel-Dieu, their future nevertheless is trembling in the balance, writes a Paris correspondent. If driven from the site where they have been established from early times they will, according to the rule of the Order, be compelled to found another hospital and to gather around them the sick and the dying. They are cloistered nuns, never leaving their seclusion until taken thence to their resting place. One peep of the outside world is allowed to the nuns of the Hotel-Dieu. It is when crossing in the night the little bridge that divides the two wings of the hospital she can look upon the towers of Notre Dame pencilled in majestic beauty against the sky. All is hard in the life of this Order. Hardly out of her novitiate she is confronted with the task of preparing the dead for burial. Alone with the corpse, her first duty, according to the rule of the Order, is to kneel at the feet of the dead. The habit of the Augustinian nun is black and white, and presents the aesthetic character which distinguishes the old religious Orders, dating from the ages when when art and religion were one, but which is to be sought for in vain in the dress of many of the modern congregations of religious women.

Cardinal Newman and Walter Scott.

Cardinal Newman was a great admirer of Walter Scott, and every year he offered Waverley novels as prizes in the Oratory School at Edgbarton, and the students were expected to pass creditable examinations in them. To Mrs. Hope Scott, the novelist's grand-daughter, the Cardinal wrote: "I have ever had the warmest sympathy for Walter Scott and it would delight me to see his place. When he was dying I was saying prayers (what ever they were worth) for him, and continually thinking of Keble's words, 'Think on the minstrel as ye kneel.'"

The Late August Belmont.

August Belmont the millionaire banker who died in New York recently, was a close personal friend of the late Cardinal McCloskey, and many were the happy hours they spent in each other's company. Mr. Belmont gave liberally of his vast fortune to Catholic charity, and his purse was always open in the interest of Home Rule for Ireland.

A MATTER OF PORCINE IDENTITY.

Not the Value of the Pig, but the Importance of the Principle.

Two or three lawyers were talking of old lawsuits the other day, when one of the oldest members of the Indianapolis bar remarked: "I remember the Perry township pig case that took up a good part of one term of court, having come up through a justice's office. The case was tried, I believe, by Governor Wallace, father of our postmaster, and there were at least two firms of lawyers on each side. Sims Colley and Thomas Walpole were in the case, and so far as Mr. Colley was concerned, he was then in the full power of his renown.

The case gave him full opportunity for the display of his picturesque genius, and the drolleries he infused into it long furnished matter of laughter for the bar. Mr. Colley, however, no matter how absurdly droll he might become, never lost sight of the best interests of his client, and certainly never lost sight of his own in the shape of as fat a fee as it was possible to obtain.

"The question was about the identity of a shoat," continued the lawyer. "The witnesses on one side swore it was a pig in a barnyard, and had never been out until it had been put into a pen, from which it was taken to be slaughtered. The witnesses on the other side swore that they had known it from the time it was a suckling. But the great point was the proof of an ear mark. One claimant, sustained by one set of witnesses, said he marked an ear of the shoat with his pocket knife, and the cut was explained at great length to the jury. The other claimant said the mark on the ear of his shoat was torn by the teeth of a dog. It was at this stage of the testimony that a sensational feature was introduced. One witness, having brought his testimony to an exciting point, added a climax by pulling from his pocket a pickled pig's ear, which he declared to be the ear of the shoat in question.

"This created a great uproar in the court room, as the effect of this pictorial testimony upon the jury could not be measured. This witness with the ear was, however, measurably discredited, and the case went on. Medical experts were called in to testify as to what the difference in appearance would be between a shoat's ear cut with a knife and one torn by the teeth of a dog. The experts did not agree, and the jury disagreed, and another trial was held, the second jury disagreeing as the first had done. Charges of perjury were made, on each side, and a number of assault and battery cases grew out of it. The costs of litigation were between \$400 and \$500 on each side."

"What was the shoat worth?" "About \$1.50; but the litigants were fighting for principle."—Indianapolis Journal.

Plucking the Ostriches.

The plucking at the ostrich farm was the chief attraction, and consequently the management received considerable patronage. It is a very novel sight, and those present were well paid for their journey to witness it. The preliminary tussle in which the bird which is to undergo the ordeal is captured is the most exciting part of the performance. After he is caught and a sack placed over his head he becomes as manageable as a kitten, but to catch him it takes four and sometimes five men, so great is their strength. They have twenty-nine birds at the farm, besides two Australian emus, monkeys, parrots, elk, bear, badgers, wildcats, etc. In speaking with one of the attendants your correspondent learned that they clear about \$100 per bird yearly. The place is well kept, and well worth a visit by tourists who visit this locality.—Santa Monica Cor. Los Angeles Express.

The Blue Jay's Song.

Did you ever hear a blue jay sing? Some people are incredulous concerning this, but we have heard the jays too often to have any doubts upon the subject. This bird, whose common note is of all bird voices most harsh and vexatious, can sing, under his breath, like a canary. But when he does sing it is always beneath some safe cover, in a dense thicket of cedars or spruces usually. For our own part we like the birds that car sing everywhere; but if the range of sweetness must be limited, let the softest strain be always reserved for the home, for the cover underneath which lies the nest.—Chicago Interior.

The Writing Telegraph.

The writing telegraph, which had its first but a tardy recognition at the hands of the commercial public, is now being extensively used. There is no question as to the value of an invention which secures absolute immunity from error in the transmission of messages and communications from one place to another. The written communication at the receiving end of the line is a duplicate of the message sent, so that the actual writing of the sender is reproduced in the message received.—New

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