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Why The Miracles of Christ Must Be Accepted

Views of Fr. de Heredia who Exposes "Psychic Phenomena."

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

Washington, D. C., Sept. 13.—Father C. M. de Heredia, S. J., of Mexico, who has been drawing large crowds in many cities of the United States by his lectures on spiritism, was a visitor at Georgetown University this week.

In his lectures Father Heredia duplicates most of the stock tricks of the noted mediums, including the so-called materialization and levitation. Although able to expose most of the performances of mediums, Father Heredia does not discredit all psychic phenomena. On the contrary he admits that some psychic phenomena cannot yet be explained by any knowledge now possessed by even the greatest scientists. But Father Heredia does assert that most of the performances of mediums which pass as psychic phenomena are merely imposture. As such, he contends, they should be exposed.

Father Heredia laughs at the suggestion that exposures of spiritism of this kind may tend to raise a question in the minds of some as to the authenticity of real miracles. "This is just what spiritists are trying to do through their imposture," Father Heredia said.

Interesting Comparisons

"It is preposterous for anyone of intelligence," said Father de Heredia, "to associate the miracles of Christ with the so-called spiritistic phenomena with which most mediums deceive a too credulous public. Such a comparison between the miracles of Christ and spiritistic phenomena is not only disrespectful—it is absurd. 'Christ never used a cabinet, he never worked in the dark in performing His miracles. He asked for no special conditions under which to work his wonders. Furthermore, he did not perform His miracles before people of a kind easily deceived. He performed them before people whom it would have been exceedingly difficult to deceive. That fact should always be kept in mind; it is a fact of deciding weight in considering the testimony in support of His miracles.

"For instance, there is the miracle of filling the nets of the fishermen. The fishermen knew their business. They had fished all night and had not caught a single fish. When they were in despair of catching any, Christ told them: 'Let down your nets.' They did, in His name, and they caught so many that their nets were breaking. They knew perfectly well that there was only one explanation of this remarkable result, the supernatural power of Christ.

"Then take the miracle of feeding the multitude. When any psychiatrist, in an open field before a crowd of seven to eight thousand people, with the nearest bakery 10 miles away, will feed the crowd abundantly with three loaves of bread and five fishes and have crumbs left over fill many baskets—when a psychiatrist performs a feat like that, then I will compare his miracles with the miracles of Christ. When these 7,000 people were fed, when their hunger was satisfied, they knew perfectly well there was no chance for hallucination, and they knew also that there was no way to get such an immense quantity of bread in such a short notice from all the neighboring towns together.

"Take the miracle of changing the water into wine at the marriage feast of Cana. Before whom was that miracle performed? Before a lot of prohibitionists, who might not be able to distinguish wine from water? No, before people who were grape growers, and whose business it was to make wine. They knew wine from water and they could not be deceived when water was changed into wine.

Miracle of Resurrection

"Take the ascension of Christ into heaven. Did He go into a cabinet at night to ascend into heaven? No, He went out into the open country and in the sunlight before hundreds of people, He ascended.

When after His resurrection He returned to earth and appeared to His apostles and many others, all question as to their being mistaken about His identity was removed by the testimony of Thomas and of the witnesses of what Thomas did. Thomas would not be convinced unless he were allowed to see Christ's wounds and to put his hands on them. Let me touch a materialized spirit and you will see how the ectoplasm works.

"So you see, there is no possible relation between the miracles of Christ and psychic phenomena. They are something entirely different. We have never had any psychic phenomena that could be compared with the miracles of Christ. His miracles are substantial facts—substantiated by testimony which cannot be controverted and the authority of which no reasonable man should question."

SISTERS CELEBRATE THEIR GOLDEN JUBILEES

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

Sau Francisco, Sept. 3.—The golden jubilee of Mother Mary Louis, General of the Dominican Order in this province, and of Sister Mary Clare of St. Rose's Academy of this city, are being celebrated this month at the Dominican Convent in San Rafael where Mother Louis is superior. Two thousand guests were present at the jubilee mass sung by the Most Rev. Edward J. Hanna.

Religious orders attending the ceremonies, which brought guests and former pupils of the Dominicans from many parts of California, included Sisters of the Holy Names, Sisters of the Presentation, Sisters of the Immaculate Heart, Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of the Holy Family, Helpers of the Holy Souls and the Ursulines. A choir of twenty-five voices from St. Patrick's Seminary assisted at the mass.

FRANCE OFFERING EDUCATION TO CHINESE

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

Ossining, Sept. 10.—The French government is encouraging, on a great scale, the education of the Chinese students in France and this will have a far-reaching effect on the prestige of that country in the Orient.

In connection with this announcement, Catholics will be interested to note that the French Bishops in the Orient are watching the movement and hope to secure the co-operation of their conferees in France so as to turn the eyes of the young exiles to the beauty of the Catholic Church.

To this end, one of the most brilliant missionaries in China, the Rev. Vincent Lebbe, C. M., has and strength characterizing Columbia today.

WOMEN DIOCESAN DIRECTORS NAMED

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

Washington, D. C.—Sept. 13.—Announcement of the appointment of nine additional diocesan representatives of the National Council of Catholic Women was made today by Miss Agnes Reagan, executive secretary. The new representatives are:

Province of Baltimore—Miss Clara Rose Coleman, Wheeling, W. Va.; Mrs. Charles A. Williams, Charlotte, N. C.

Province of Boston—Miss Mary A. S. Mullan, Fall River, Mass.; Miss Wilfrid J. Lessard, Manchester, N. H.

Province of Cincinnati—Mrs. E. F. Brucker, Toledo, Ohio.

Province of New Orleans—Mrs. Thomas H. Doyle, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Province of Philadelphia—Miss Anna D. Gamble, York, Pa.

Province of St. Paul—Mrs. Jas. B. Dunn, St. Cloud, Minn.

Province of San Francisco—Mrs. Edward L. Doheny, Los Angeles, Cal.

City of Bogota Is South America's Catholic Center

Dr. Thomas Walsh, Just Returned Gives Interesting Impressions.

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

New York, Sept. 10.—Bogota, the capital city of our sister Republic of Columbia, in the opinion of Dr. Thomas Walsh, who has just returned from several months' visit to that remote city, is the most Catholic of any of the greater centers of North and South America, and with the possible exception of Dublin, is more practically Catholic than any city whatever in Europe.

In an interview given to a reporter for the N. C. W. C. News Service, Dr. Walsh states that Bogota is the one capital where there remains a union of Church and State. Conditions in the religious and social world will be found to be exceedingly good. Religion is flourishing on every side. Beautiful churches, old and new, are crowded daily with fervent worshippers; services are well conducted, and highly intelligent sermons are preached in all the churches.

"Religion is an actuality," said Dr. Walsh, "in a way surprising even to a Catholic from lands where Protestantism is greatly in the air; there is a constancy in prayer and adoration such as characterizes a monastery. The people believe in the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament and rule their daily lives in accordance, visiting the churches, making gaseous novenas and triumphs, with a constant celebration of feast days, proclaimed in the press and by placards on the city walls. 'Religion is the chief thing of the citizens,' said a visiting American, with a touch of scorn. It is true, the Catholics should be very proud of it.

Citizens Frequent Communicants

"The citizen of Bogota is a frequent communicant. More than 60 percent of the inhabitants, men and women, go to receive communion at least once a month. The daily communicants are numerous.

"The clergy are admirable in a remarkable way. Their stipends are very small and there can be no complaint against them on this score. They are scholars, and decent and honorable in every way; from their most determined opponents there is never the slightest hint of a scandal or charges of any irregularity in their conduct. There is some criticism of the influence they have exerted in politics in past years; but at present, certainly, there is no foundation for charges of this kind against them.

In short they are the admirable product and the root of the admirable conditions of health and strength characterizing Columbia today.

"They have to their credit the production in their midst of scholars and literates of high achievement. Monsignor Rafael Carrasquilla, Rector of the Colegio del Rosario, an institution dating from early in the sixteenth century, pointed out to me that his college had educated practically all the Presidents of Colombia, good, bad and indifferent, from the foundation of the Republic. The Jesuits in the ancient College de San Bartholome and in their modern school of La Merced also accomplish wonders in the way of elementary and higher education. The Christian Brothers are particularly powerful in Bogota, possessing a very fine College La Salle and numerous subsidiary schools. In the procession on the feast of Corpus Christi their pupils distinctly outnumbered those of all the other institutions.

"The press in Bogota, as in the rest of the world, is inclined to be slightly critical of the religious authorities. This creates a friction that at a little distance does not seem of great importance, although several of the daily newspapers have placed under interdiction by the

Bishops. There is an official daily known as *Catolicismo* which is largely confined to church bulletins and news of a strictly Catholic character. There does not seem to be any journal of general news that is satisfactory to the strictest views in Bogota.

With conditions in so healthy and sane a state, it is unfortunate that among Colombians there is not a better realization of the practical identity of our Catholicity of North and South. There was shown at the largest theater the American film, 'The Secret of the Confessional,' and it was really difficult to persuade these Catholic people that the priests in their American street dress were really priests of their own church. They needed to be reminded of the fact over and over again.

Protestant Missionaries Not Encouraged

"The missionaries of the Protestant Church have been able to accomplish practically nothing at home with the Colombians at large. There is a school which calls itself 'The American School for Girls,' but this, as well as a sort of union chapel of Methodist and Presbyterian complexion, is badly attended and not prosperous. The only danger seems to be in are ardent for religious truth, the habit that Colombians recent are affecting very strongly of to dissociate themselves from past sending their sons to non-Catholic and anti-Catholic schools in the United States, and many of them of an agricultural variety—ism which had led to many Catholicism in North America, as and rapidly surrender the principles of their fathers and mothers, the people for very dubious notions regarding progress and modernity. On their return to Colombia, some few of them do return to the homes they have forgotten, they the small body of maleducated and rule their daily lives in accordance, visiting the churches, making gaseous novenas and triumphs, with a constant celebration of feast days, proclaimed in the press and by placards on the city walls. 'Religion is the chief thing of the citizens,' said a visiting American, with a touch of scorn. It is true, the Catholics should be very proud of it.

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Russian People Deeply Religious

"Even today the religious movement is strong in Russia, but it does not spring from the leadership of the Orthodox clergy. The churches are crowded it is not due to the clergy, but the people who fulfill sacred functions, but they have no real quality of leadership. All the activities of the church are guided by the people who have formed parish and diocesan councils which dominate church affairs. The clergy can not break with those without losing their power.

"The Jewish government of Russia took no account of these facts and has on many occasions aroused the resentment of the people by indiscretions directed at the church. In 1918 it assisted at a religious demonstration in Petrograd in which thousands protested against the attempts of the Bolsheviks to take over the monastery of St. Alexander. The soviet was forced to give in to the people. I could cite many similar cases in which the initiative was taken by the people and not the clergy.

ANCIENT BASILICA'S RUINS FOUND UNDER RHEIMS CATHEDRAL

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

Paris, Sept. 13.—Ruins of the basilica erected in honor of the Blessed Virgin by St. Nicaise in 401, together with sacred statues of ivory strangely and beautifully carved, have been discovered beneath the foundations of the great Cathedral of Rheims by workmen.

The nave of the primitive building, regarding the character of which records leave little doubt, has been disclosed, supported by three Roman arches in good condition. Archaeologists have made careful investigations of the sandy floor of the ancient edifice and these investigations resulted in finding the lost art treasures. It is apparent that the monks of the period had buried the images to save them from some barbarian invasion of that time.

SISTER WINS PRIZE FOR PAINTING

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

St. Paul, Sept. 10.—Sister Maria Teresa, of the College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, has received second prize in the competition for painting at the Minnesota State Fair. Fifty dollars in cash and a silver medal were awarded to her for her picture, 'Portrait of Marie R.'

Since entering the Sisterhood of St. Joseph of Carondelet Sister Maria Teresa has studied under leading artists of Europe. On her return to the United States several years ago she brought back with her several fine paintings which are now in the College of St. Catherine and St. Margaret's Academy.

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Precaution Increases Power

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Russians Are Receptive to Catholic Teaching

At Karkov Congregation of 6,000 Professed Conversion—'Old Believers' confer with Catholic leaders.

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

Rome, Sept. 1.—Any study of the political upheavals of Russia that does not take into account religious conditions is certain to abound in false conclusions," declares the Rev. D. Kalpensky, a native Roman Catholic priest of Russia who has just arrived in Rome and who declares that a vast number of Russian people look forward to a reunion with Catholicity as a necessity of the rebirth of this nation.

"International, political and social crises vary in different countries," declared Father Kalpensky in a recent interview, "and it is well to examine Russia from a religious as well as a political viewpoint. The Russian people are not as ardent for religious truth as they have never been able to dissociate themselves from past sending their sons to non-Catholic and anti-Catholic schools in the United States, and many of them of an agricultural variety—ism which had led to many Catholicism in North America, as and rapidly surrender the principles of their fathers and mothers, the people for very dubious notions regarding progress and modernity. On their return to Colombia, some few of them do return to the homes they have forgotten, they the small body of maleducated and rule their daily lives in accordance, visiting the churches, making gaseous novenas and triumphs, with a constant celebration of feast days, proclaimed in the press and by placards on the city walls. 'Religion is the chief thing of the citizens,' said a visiting American, with a touch of scorn. It is true, the Catholics should be very proud of it.

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"The Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow is powerless to protect the rights of religion. The weak and cowardly Patriarch Tikhon symbolizes the impotency of the clergy. The works of Dostoevski, written fifty years ago, have proved true: 'The Russian church has been stricken with paralysis' and it has the greater force when it is remembered that Dostoevski revered the Church above everything.

"What is now being observed is the last crisis of a sick man. The people in intellectual and educated classes whom I have talked with are anxious to save Christianity, but do not know how. Faith has not been lessened but increased. Last year the soviet of one of the small cities decided to take over a schismatic church as an infant asylum and a Catholic Church as a motion picture house. The resistance of the workers, who united and defended not only their own church but the Catholic Church, and the action of the soldiers who refused to fire on their brothers and the children of many of whom took part in the demonstrations, furnished a fine example of the spirit of the people.

Precaution Increases Power

"For if the official Church is paralyzed, the conscience of the people is not and that is the Achilles heel of the autocrat."

"The whole movement is rather definite as yet, but its existence is attested to by many facts when one sees yesterday's believers praying in the churches, witnesses the fervor of the priests and hears the supplicants themselves speaking anxiously of a sign he knows that the signs of the morning are at hand.

"There are many, indeed, especially among the higher clergy who are attempting to repeat the experiment, which proved a failure in the past, of uniting with the Anglican Church. Their influence, however, is nil. They have been unable to do so under the Czar, how can they expect to be a success today, especially when one takes into account the hatred which the Russian people have for England?

"Moreover, the Russians have considered that the search for truth is the search for the Church of Christ. They will not take up with Protestantism or any other nation.

"The plain way forward is religious union with the Catholic Church and this I am sure can be realized. Contempt of Catholicity as a moribund remnant of the middle ages is past forever. The enemies of the Church look upon her as powerful and fearful. Her friends are either openly Catholic or openly sympathetic and ready to be converted. Thousands of men of all classes are already counted in her numbers and they do much to counteract the Bolshevik propaganda ideas of the Church. Such for example, is Professor Karasavin, a man who is noted for his knowledge of the middle ages and an able apologist. A short time ago he started on a work of Catholic mysticism, but was unable to pursue it because of the condition of the country which permits the government an absolute monopoly of the printing press. The work, however, is being done in private, and much expected of it.

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