BELIEVE IT - - - NOT

By REV. OWEN B. McGUIRE, D.D.

(Continued from Page 1)

... people." Yet many of these ... and the rank and file ... the laity of the various sects, still ... refused to believe ... the Bible ... and the Bible alone" as the rule of their faith. Strange logic and unbased muddleheadedness! For it ... may be said without much exaggeration that from the first Chapter of Genesis to the last chapter in the Apocalypse there is not a page where the doctrine of the existence of a personal Devil and of his army of evil spirits is not either expressed or understood. For Catholics the doctrine is of course a matter of faith. As Hilaire Belloc ... puts it, we are surrounded by invisible enemies. There is, he says, a battle of invisible powers carried on constantly over men's heads for the possession of their souls. St. Peter tells us that the Devil goes about "like a warring lion seeking whom he may devour." Hence our life here below is described in Holy Writ as a warfare," and St. Paul tells us that this warfare is with the powers" and "principalities of darkness" namely that our enemies in this conflict are not one only, but many, united under some kind of leadership so that they can be described as an army, a kingdom, a power, a principality organized for our destruction. As I have said these truths are either expressed or understood in every page of the Bible and the Bible is a divine Revelation, the word of God.

And it is just as clearly evident in the same Revelation that these evil powers are by some inscrutable permission of Divine Providence, permitted not only to tempt our souls but also to molest and even to injure our bodies. No person who believes in the Gospel or in the Old Testament even if these books be considered as mere reliable human documents, can doubt that truth. But thanks be to God we Catholics have an infallible guide to teach us how we are to understand what is there recorded. We have the Church.

From the first moment when the Church takes us under her protection until the last when she sends us on our journey to the hereafter for which she has been preparing us throughout our lives, her whole liturgy and ritual are permeated by a realization of that truth. At the baptismal font she begins with the exorcisms, and standing by our death-bed, "recommending the soul to God" she prays that in that supreme moment we may be strengthened and protected from the temptations, the deceits, the frauds of the "malignant enemy". For us the existence of the Devil is not a myth, nor a matter for merriment, nor a "superstition of primitive peoples." It is a fact, a truth, a revealed truth.

Conclusion. The Devil is a reality. So are his associate evil spirits. He is permitted not only to tempt our souls but on occasion to molest our bodies. Whether this latter happens in a particular case depends on the evidence. In the Roman Ritual the Church warns us very strictly and severely not to assume it until the evidence is made perfectly clear.

II. What about the "Revelations" of this particular case out West? In the first place we must remember that the Devil is a liar and the father of lies. He was the first liar in recorded history and he lied to deceive human souls. Therefore, when two of the evil spirits in the case told that they were "the lost souls of two historical persons, we are not obliged to believe them. Besides the Catholic Church has never pronounced on the eternal damnation of any human soul. What happens between God and the human soul in the last moment which is the decisive one, is never authoritatively revealed.

III. There are some things many things that the Devil and his associates do not know. We have no reason for believing that he know whether the Anti-Christ is born already or not. We have, on the contrary good reasons for believing that he does not know it. The common teaching of the Fathers is that he did not know of the Incarnation, nor even of the Virgin birth of Our Lord. St. Ignatius Martyr says that to conceal this truth from the Devil was one of the reasons why Our Blessed Mother was espoused to St. Joseph. Moreover the Fathers and later theologians in their Commentaries on this Gospel read on last Sunday tell us that the Devil was testing our Divine Lord to find out what he did not know whether Our Lord was indeed the promised Messiah and the Son of God. We can reasonably conclude that he does not know whether the Anti-Christ is already born and that when he says he knows it he is acting up to his character as a liar and the father of lies.

Of course ... that the Devil has already some youth in training to play later the role of Anti-Christ, some young man conceived in sacrilege and born in iniquity as the "revelation" out West seems to indicate. Indeed we may reasonably assume that he has built such hopes on many a young man in these nineteen hundred years since the prophecy was made. But such expectations of Satan are only guesswork. His hope, too, are often frustrated. He cannot control the forces of free will and of divine grace. He cannot foresee the future. No doubt he thought ... young zealot named Saul of Tarsus would become in his hands a great aide to crush the infant Church. But he did not foresee that by a sudden flash from Heaven that young man would be stricken down on the way to Damascus and from Saul the persecutor would be converted into Paul the Saint and the Apostle of the Gentiles.

In like manner he may have built great hopes for the future on that other ardent young man a great sinner even in his boyhood **tantillus puer et tantus peccator!** as he later described himself an intellectual giant, and a fanatical Manichean. But Satan did not foresee that day in the garden when Aurelius heard the angel's voice, **"tolle et lege"** take up the book and read and that this young Aurelius was to be one the great Saint Augustine, the greatest among all the Doctors.

The Devil does not know whether the Anti-Christ is already on earth, nor when he will appear on earth.

IV. Neither does he know when this world is to end. That is certain. We have Our Divine Lord's word for it. You have heard it in the Gospel read on the last Sunday after Pentecost (Matthew XXIV, 36): "But of that day and hour no one knoweth, no not even the angels of heaven but the Father Alone." If it has not been revealed to the Angels who enjoy the Beatific Vision it certainly is unknown to the fallen angels who are excluded forever from the sight of God. "No one knoweth."

Even if this revelation had not been recorded in the Gospel, we could conclude that the time of the end of the world is unknown to the evil spirits. The Devil and his Angels do not know the future. That is an accepted Catholic doctrine. Which recalls the case of our old friend, Saint Teresa of Avila. In the beginning of her mystic experience she had many visions and what she calls "Locutions," words of counsel or admonition, at times revealing something of the future. She was much perturbed and distressed by these things because some of her friends told her they surely were the work of the Devil trying to deceive and ensnare her. Later at the request of her Confessor she wrote a detailed account of her religious experience, a "relation" as it was called in Spanish. In that "relation" which known as her "Life" became one of the great classics of the world's literature, she gives a number of reasons why she could not believe that the "locutions" were from an evil source. Among these reasons, she says, is this one. She had never received a "locution" in regard to the future that did not come true. But she adds, the Devil does not know the future. The writings of St. Teresa have all been examined and approved by the Church. We can accept her argument.

A strange thing ... ing the plain words of our Lord in last Sunday's Gospel that "that day and hour no one knoweth," there are two or three sects in this country, whose founders in the last century proved from their Bible the date of the last Judgment. It comes from taking one text of the Bible, interpreting it by their private judgment, and neglecting other texts. The Devil himself did this very same thing. He can quote Scripture to his own purpose. In this very same Gospel of last Sunday he did so. "If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down, for it is written that he hath given his angels charge over thee, and in their hands they shall bear Thee up lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone." But he took good care not to quote the ... verse which contains the condemnation of his own malediction.

That quotation ... taken from Psalm 90 a psalm that ... have to recite every evening ... office of Compline, and the ... verse after the one quoted ... "Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk: and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon," namely the Devil himself.

Even as a sermon I fear this would be already too long. Yet there are some other questions that come to mind when one reads of this case out West. Some other day we can consider them. For the present let us thank God we are Catholics, protected by an infallible guide from the pitfalls of private interpretations and the vagaries of our emotional nature. And in our Study Clubs we cannot recall too often the words of Archbishop McNicholas at the close of the Convention in Columbus Centre last October. That what we need most of all in the atmosphere in which we have to live to-day is good, sound doctrinal instruction. Our religion does not eschew emotion and sentiment for it takes in the whole man the whole of our human nature. But its basis is intelligence. As Chesterton says "Catholics are the only true Rationalists."

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Guide List For Catholic Movie-Goers

Catholic Courier MOVIE-GOERS' GUIDE

As a guide for Legion of Decency members, a list of current attractions at Rochester's larger theaters is given below. The rating is based on a moral estimate made from the National Legion of Decency List on motion pictures recently released.

Key to ratings:

Class A—Section 1—Unobjectionable for general patronage.
Class A—Section 2—Unobjectionable for adults.
Class B—Objectionable in part.
Class C—Condemned.

CAPITOL
So Red the Rose. Class A. Section 1
To Beat the Band. Class A. Section 1
A Night at the Opera. Class B.
Guard That Girl. (not classified)
Three Kids and a Queen. Class A.
Coronado. Class A. Section 2

CENTURY
Klondike Annie. Class B.

LITTLE
The Informer. Class A. Section 2

LOEW'S ROCHESTER
It Had to Happen. Class B.
Dangerous Intrigue (not classified)

PALACE
Country Doctor (not classified)

REGENT
Captain Blood. Class A. Section 1
Anything Goes. Class B.

TEMPLE
Spy 77. Class A. Section 2
Bridge of Sighs. Class A. Section 2

RIVIERA
Magnificent Obsession. Class A. Section 2
Broadway Hostess. Class A. Section 2
Peter Ibbetson. Class B.
Another Face. Class A. Section 2
A Thousand a Minute. Class A. Section 1
Charlie Chan's Secret. Class A. Section 1

CLASS A—Section 1—Unobjectionable for General Patronage

A Thousand a Minute
Annie Oakley
Atlantic Adventurer
Bad Boy
Bar 20 Rides Again
Beauty's Daughter
Between Men
Big Broadcast of 1936
Boulder Dam
The Bohemian Girl
Bulldog Courage
Burning Gold
The Calling of Dan Matthews
Cattle Thief
Captain Blood
Charlie Chan's Secret
Chatterbox
Cheers of the Crowd
Collegiate
Coast Patrol
Dance Band
Das Schloss im Sueden
Drift Fence
Der Vetter Aus DingFda
Don't Get Personal
Drei Kaiserjager
Der Himmel Auf Erden
Der Adjutant seiner Hoheit
Every Saturday Night
East of Java
The Face in the Fog
Fang and Claw
Fast Bullets
Follow the Fleet
Forced Landing
Freshman Love
Gallant Defender
Garden Murder Case
Gentle Julia
The Ghost Goes West
Give Us This Night
The Great Impersonation
Harmony Lane
The Healer
Her Master's Voice
Here Comes Trouble
Here's To Romance
Hitch Hike Lady
His Night Out
I Dream Too Much
I Live for Love
I'll Love You Always
In Person
It's a Great Life
Kid Ranger
The Lady in Scarlet
Last Days of Pompeii
Last of the Clintons
The Last Outpost
Lawless Riders
The Life of Louis Pasteur
Leathernecks Have Landed
Little America
The Littlest Rebel
The Lone Wolf Returns
Love on a Bet
Lucky Terror
The Milky Way
Man of Steel
Maria Chapdelaine
Men of the Hour
Midsummer Night's Dream
Millions in the Air
Milky Way
Miss Pacific Fleet
Mister Hobo
Modern Times
Moonlight on the Prairie
Music Goes 'Round
Music Is Magic
Mutiny on the Bounty
My Marriage
Mysteries of Notre Dame
Mysterious Avenger
Nevada
The Night Is Young
The Officers' Mess
Once in a Blue Moon
O'Shaughnessy's Boy
Paradise Canyon
Pasteur (French)
Paddy O'Day
Personal Maid's Secret
Preview Murder Case
Prisoner of Shark Island
Professional Soldier
Red Blood of Courage
Rendezvous
Return of Jimmy Valentine
Rhodes the Empire Builder
Rose Marie
Rose of the Rancho
The Sage Brush Troubadour
Scrooge
Seven Keys to Baldpate
She Couldn't Take It
Silver Spurs
The Singing Vagabond
Skull and Crown
So Red the Rose
The Spanish Cape Mystery
Stars Over Broadway
Storm Over the Andes
[illegible] Familie
Tale of Two Cities
Thanks a Million
Three Live Ghosts
Three Musketeers
The Throwback
Too Tough to Kill
Tough Guy
Transatlantic Tunnel
Trail of Terror
Trail of the Lonesome Pine
Two for Tonight
Two in the Dark
Timothy's Quest
The Unknown Woman
The Valley of Wanted Men
The Valley of the Lawless
Western Courage
Whispering Smith Speaks
Woman Trap
Yellow Dust
You May Be Next
Your Uncle Dudley
[illegible] Katrina

CLASS A—Section 2—Unobjectionable for Adults

Ah! Wilderness
Alias Bulldog Drummond
Another Face
The Bride Comes Home
The Bridge of Sighs
Broadway Hostess
Circumstantial Evidence
Coronado
Crime and Punishment
Crime and Chastisement (In French)
Dancing Feet
Dark Hour
Desire
The Divine Spark
Die Frauen vom Tannhof (German)
Exclusive Story
The Escape from Devil's Island
[illegible]
[illegible] Veronika
I'll Name the Murderer
Informer
It Happened in New York
If You Could Only Cook
[illegible] of the Jungle
Kind Lady
King of the Damned
Lac Aux Dames
Lady of Secrets
La Maternelle
The Last of the Pagans
Leichte Kavallerie
Let's Live Tonight
Love Before Breakfast
Manhattan Butterfly
[illegible]
The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo
Magnificent Obsession
The Murder Man
Muss 'Em Up
Next Time We Love
The Passing of the Third Floor Back
One Way Ticket
On Probation
Peter Ibbetson
The Perfect Gentleman
The Petrified Forest
Private Life of Louis XIV
Public Opinion
Riff Raff
Ring Around the Moon
Road Gang
Society Fever
Spy 77
Strike Me Pink
Sweet Surrender
[illegible]
Tango
Three Women
Way Down East
The Widow from Monte Carlo
We're Only Human
Whipsaw
Wife Versus Secretary

CLASS B—Objectionable in Part

The Lady Consents
Anything Goes
A Night at the Opera
Becky Sharp
Born to Gamble
Ceiling Zero
Mr. Cohen Takes a Walk
The Crime of Dr. Crespi
Dangerous
Dangerous Waters
First a Girl
Flirting with Danger
Frisco Waterfront
Hands Across the Table
Hell-Ship Morgan
I Conquer the Sea
Invisible Ray
It Had to Happen
Ito (French)
King of Burlesque
Klondike Annie
Living Dead
Melo
Mimi
The New Gulliver
No More Ladies
Outcast Lady
The Pay Off
Pursuit of Happiness
Reckless
Red Wagon
Remember Last Night
Ship's Cafe
Splendor
Soak the Rich
Song of the Saddle
Sylvia Scarlett
The Walking Dead
Walking Death
Waterfront Lady

CLASS C—Condemned

Guilty Parents
High School Girl
Java Head

English Birth Rate Reaches Low Mark

London (NC) The birth-rate in England and Wales during 1934 was the lowest since 1850, with the sole exception of the year 1933. Last year 597,642 births were registered an increase of 17,229 on the low record of 1933. The rate is 14.8 per thousand.

Marriages during 1934 number 342,307, as against 318,191 in the previous year.

RECOVER STOLEN BONDS

New York (NC) with the arrest of three men police here have announced the recovery of $13,400 worth of stocks and bonds which they assert are part of $50,000 worth of certificates stolen from a safe in the rectory of St. Augustine's Church, Hartford, Conn., in August, 1933.

PASSION PLAY STARTS

Union City, N. J. (NC) Over 4,000 persons are expected to witness "Veronica's Veil" this year, by the Passionist Fathers who sponsor the noted Passion Play here.

Holy Father Points Spiritual Benefit Of Study of Bees

Vatican City (NC) "The Life of the Bee" was the theme of an impromptu lecture, half-economic and half-moral in tone, recently given by His Holiness Pope Pius XI.

His Holiness receives all kinds of gifts from all sections of the world. The arrival of two artistic vases, containing the finest honey, caused little surprise. They were gifts from Count appi Ricordari, president of the Italian apiculturists.

Bees, the Holy Father stated, afford an example of marvelous commerce: a privileged organization that is both social and hierarchial and which permits the division of labor and the execution of a prodigious work, a product of infinite variety according to the country where it is produced, its altitude and its latitudes. This product, His Holiness said, may be regarded as one of nature's most exquisite gifts and is as good for the health as it is to the taste.

Some 60 years ago, the Pontiff remarked he had become a temporary but deeply interested apiculturist. It was during a vacation that he had an opportunity to study closely the life of a bee. "I drew from it," he said, "an incontestable spiritual profit."

COLTON QUOTED

There are two things which speak as with a voice from heaven that He that fills that eternal throne must be on the side of virtue, and that which He befriends must finally prosper and prevail. The first is that the bad are never completely happy and at ease, although possessed of everything that this world can bestow; and that the good are never completely miserable, although deprived of everything that this world can take away. We are so framed and constituted, that the most vicious cannot but pay a secret though unwilling homage to virtue, inasmuch as the worst men cannot bring themselves thoroughly to esteem a bad man, although he may be their dearest friend, nor can they thoroughly despise a good man although he may be their bitterest enemy. From this inward esteem for virtue, which the noblest cherish, and which the basest cannot expel, it follows that virtue is the only bond of union on which we can thoroughly depend." Colton.

The only people that money makes hateful are those who would be yellow without it. - Evansville Courier.

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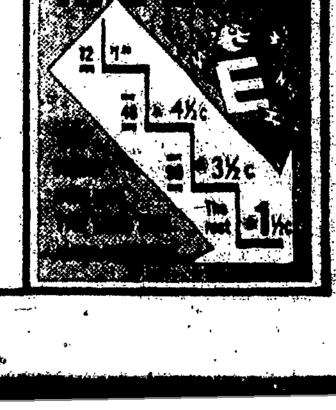
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