

A REMARKABLE CHAPTER.

As FOR the unbelieving nations, they will be attracted by the good odour of Jesus Christ; but they will return to the fold of Catholicity; they will be converted to the true Pastor and Bishop of their souls. Return, then, thanksgiving to the Lord, because after the tempest He will give His Church a peace and a joy which shall be extraordinary.

Of this last triumph to be accorded to the Church on earth before the days of the final persecution and of the appearance of Antichrist St. Hildegard often spoke. For instance, after relating an awful vision which she had beheld of a horrible beast attacking a woman who symbolises the Church, and having described his overthrow by the vengeance of Heaven, in terms which remind us of the great judgment which Anna Maria announced, she adds, 'the people, witnesses of this prodigy, exclaimed, "Alas! who can save us? alas! what is this that we see? Ah! who can save us? Who will be able to deliver us? How is it possible that we have allowed ourselves to be so deceived? O God most powerful, have pity on us! Let us return, let us, then, return. Let us hasten to embrace the testament of the Gospel of Christ. For, alas! alas! we have been deceived." And behold,' continues the saint, 'the feet of the image of this woman appeared all brilliant with light and resplendent as the sun. And I heard a voice from Heaven which said to me, "Although all things on earth approach to their doom, so that the world, deprived of all its strength, is declining to its ruin under the weight of its sufferings and its scourges, nevertheless the spouse of My Son, persecuted in her children by the precursors of the son of perdition, will not be shaken, although she will be violently assailed by them. On the contrary, at the end of the ages she will come forth stronger and more vigorous than ever, and, appearing more beautiful and more glorious, she will present herself to her Spouse with greater sweetness and tenderness to receive His caresses."

In this mystical language are shadowed forth the evening glories of the Church militant, which F. Faber, in the preface to his translation of the Venerable Grignon de Montfort's treatise on 'The True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin,' calls 'that great age of the Church which is to be the Age of Mary.' This age, heralded by the definition of her Immaculate Conception, shall give special glory to her by whom God the Father gave His Only-Begotten Son to the world, that 'rich treasury' of God, as Grignon de Montfort calls her, 'in which He has laid up all that He has of beauty, splendour, of rarity and of preciousness, even to His own Son,—Mary whom the Saints have named the Treasure of the Lord, out of whose plenitude all are made rich.' These days of triumph may be brief, but they will be exceedingly glorious, for they will be as it were the earthly coronation of God's most holy Mother. 'Peace will return to the world,' said Maria Lataste, speaking of the same glorious time, 'because Mary shall breathe upon the tempest and calm it; may her name be praised, blessed, and exalted for ever. The prisoners will know that they owe their liberty to her; the exiles, their country; the afflicted, their peace; and all, their welfare. Betwixt thee and thy protected ones there will be a mutual exchange of graces and thanksgivings, one of love and attachment, and from North to South, from East to West, all will proclaim Mary—Mary conceived without sin, Mary queen of earth and of Heaven.'

Concerning this penultimate age of the Church we find some remarkable passages in the Commentary on the Apocalypse by the Venerable Barthelme Holzhauser, which exhibits a striking conformity to the more modern utterances, and serve to show that the expectation of the 'Great Pontiff' and the 'Great Monarch' was equally strong in his day as at the present; and, in fact, as we have said, it dates from much farther back. Holzhauser, however, did not profess to be delivering predictions himself, but simply interpreting those of the Apocalypse. Nevertheless, it would seem that he was conscious of receiving special illumination to this end; for, on breaking off his labors at the commencement of the fifteenth chapter, and being questioned by his disciples as to his reason for doing so, he replied that he no longer felt himself enlightened by the same spirit. Holzhauser was, we might say, the Olier of Germany, having dedicated his life to a similar object, the reformation of the secular clergy, and adopted means for that end which bear a strong resemblance to those employed by the great founder of St. Sulpice. He died as parish priest of Bingen, with the reputation of eminent sanctity, in 1658. Amongst his high supernatural gifts must certainly be reckoned that of prophecy, which gives a singular authority to his Commentary. It is peculiarly interesting to ourselves to know that he foretold that the English would ultimately return to the bosom of the Church, and would contribute to the exaltation and progress of Catholicism even far more efficaciously than had their forefathers. He also foretold the ravages of Josephism in Germany, the sanguinary wars which were to be its chastisement at the time of the first Empire, and the career of the illustrious Pope Pius VII. He wrote his Commentary on the Apocalypse in the solitudes of the Tyrol, given up the while to meditation, prayer, and fasting. He divided the history of the Catholic Church into seven ages, which he considers to be symbolised by the Seven Churches of Asia. The first age, which may be styled the period of seed-sowing, extended from the time of Jesus Christ and the Apostles to that of Nero; the second age, called that of irrigation, comprehended the time of the ten persecutions until the reign of Constantine; the third age is the illuminative, or that of the Doctors, and extends from the time of Pope Sylvester and Constantine to that of Leo III. and Charlemagne; the fourth age, called pacific, reaches to the time of Leo X.; the fifth age, which is that of affliction, begins with Leo X. and the reign of Charles V. It includes what we call modern times, and was inaugurated by the heresy of Luther. In it Catholics were oppressed by heretics and bad Christians. Everywhere there were to be deplorable calamities and terrible wars. Kingdoms were to be convulsed, thrones overturned, princes put to death. There were to be conspiracies formed for the foundation of republics; the Church and her ministers were to be despoiled. This age is to be

succeeded by the sixth, that of consolation, which the children of the Church are now expecting; it is the same of which St. Catherine and St. Hildegard have spoken in such glowing terms; it is to be of short duration, and terminate with the appearance of Antichrist, which will usher in the seventh and last age, the age of desolation, embracing the whole period of Antichrist to the end of the world.

The sixth age, that of consolation, was to be the witness of a change, the effect of the omnipotent hand of God, so marvellous, that no one could have conceived it. There will be a great and holy Pontiff; and a powerful Monarch, sent by God, will arise and put an end to disorder. He will subject all to his power, and will display an ardent zeal for the true Church of Christ, and all heresies will be destroyed; the Empire of the Turks will be broken; and all nations shall come and adore their God in the unity of the true Catholic and Roman faith. Love, concord, peace, and happiness shall reign among men. The whole world will be as it were the patrimony of this powerful monarch; for, by the help of the Lord, he shall liberate the earth from the wicked men and from the evils with which it is afflicted. Under his auspices a great Council, the greatest of all the Councils, will be brought to a happy conclusion, after it has been subjected to much hostility and opposition. He will use his power to enforce its decrees. God shall bless him, and give all things into his hands.

This great Council, foretold also by Anna Maria, had already been announced in the clearest terms by Sœur de la Nativité, a humble lay-sister in the Ursuline Convent of Fougères, about the year 1792. Her Life and Revelations were first given to the world in 1818. After describing the poisonous effects of the Revolution throughout the world, she said, 'but the assembled Church shall one day condemn and destroy the vicious principle of this wicked constitution. I see in God a numerous assemblage of ministers of the Church, who, strong as an army in battle array and like to a firm and immovable pillar, shall sustain the rights of the Church and of its head, and re-establish her ancient discipline. What a consolation and joy for all the true and faithful! I see in God a great Power, which shall restore all to good order. False worship shall be abolished, all the abuses of the Revolution shall be swept away, and religion shall return to be more flourishing than ever.'

We will sum up this subject of modern prophecy in the words of the 'Civita Cattolica' of May 4, 1872. They express sentiments which we thoroughly adopt. 'We protest once more that it is not in our mind to put forward as authentic any of the prophecies recorded by us. It belongs to the Church to judge of their supernatural origin. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the agreement of so many and various presages in defining events the expectation of which is in the heart of the greater number of Catholics possesses a persuasive force and is a kind of seal of high probability, if not of certainty. This becomes much clearer if, with the light of right reason and pure faith, we study the present condition of civil society and of the Church. Generally speaking, all intelligent persons, including even the irreligious, with one voice admit that without some remedy the nature of which the human mind cannot divine, the world cannot go on long as it is at present. Either it must be reformed or it will be precipitated into an abyss of barbarism. In like manner wise Christians are more than unanimous in admitting that the Church is a prey to a diabolical and universal persecution hitherto unexampled; therefore God must come to her aid with succors proportioned to the need, that is, extraordinary; nor is there any room to doubt that in an opportune time He will do so, in virtue of His infallible promise: "*Porta inferi non prevalebunt.*" Hence we find ourselves in this extreme case—that the salvation of society, no less than of the Church, requires an unaccustomed intervention of omnipotent power. If this be so, how should we not believe that come it will?'

THE WATER OF LOURDES.

MIRACULOUS CURE OF A BOSTON LADY.

"COLUMBUS," one of the American Pilgrims, thus writes to the 'Catholic Review,' under date of June 2, of the miraculous cure of an American lady by immersion in the waters of Lourdes:—

Yesterday Mrs E. L. Baker, of New Bedford, Mass. (formerly of Boston), was instantly cured of a malady that the Boston doctors had given up as incurable. She was carried by two men from the railroad cars to her carriage, and from her carriage to her room at the hotel, on last Saturday; on Sunday morning to the miraculous waters, and when the two gentlemen who had watched outside to carry her to her carriage presented themselves at the bath-room doors, she joyously thanked them, saying she was able to walk with any of them, and off she skipped making vigorous use of her new found feet. On being introduced to her this evening, in reply to my question how it happened, she smilingly replied that she did not know, but that she placed her feet in the water, and asked her sister-in-law, who was present, whether she had them in it or not. One, two, three, or four minutes had passed, when she felt she had been cured. Her husband told me that he expected, before coming, that she would be cured, but then stated that the same would have happened to a believer in any other creed. He is a Protestant, she a Catholic. I only mention this as Mrs Baker is from our own country, which fact makes it more interesting to one and all of us.

The owner of a popular menagerie tells a New York editor these facts about the cost of wild animals, and how long they live; Lions range in price from 1500dol. to 3000dol.; African lions, being the largest, sometimes cost above 4000dol. They live from 8 to 20 years. The Bengal tiger lives from 15 to 18 years, and costs nearly as much as the lion. African elephants range from 800dol. to 4000dol. and live to three-score years. Camels and Llamas are worth about 1200dol.; the quagga, 2000dol.; and monkeys, from 25dol. to 1000dol.

Two men have died in a Liverpool hospital through mere fear of hydrophobia.