

THE KNOCK APPARITIONS.

(From the Nation.)

[WE have received from a reliable source the following narrative related by a member of the Order of Christian Brothers regarding his wonderful experiences at Knock:—]

I proceed to give an account of the apparitions which I have witnessed at the chapel of Knock.

I arrived at this now famous sanctuary on the eve of the feast of the Annunciation; but, owing to the vast concourse of pilgrims gathered there from all parts of the country, I failed to get admission till the following day.

Towards the evening of Holy Thursday I succeeded in obtaining a seat quite close to our Lady's altar. This was within the sanctuary, and here I had resolved on remaining during the night. The little edifice, which is of cruciform shape, was crowded to excess, and the fervour and devotion of the whole congregation surpassed immeasurably anything I had ever witnessed in public.

So far as I know, the first vision seen during Holy Week was on the night of Holy Thursday, or, strictly speaking, on Good Friday morning, for it was past midnight. It was a representation of the Crucifixion manifest on the side wall of the sanctuary, and was witnessed by three or four of those stationed within the rails. Though I repeatedly directed my eyes to this wall I could not at any time discern such a representation. Being then an invalid, I was sitting up, doubtful if such a manifestation were really apparent. Soon afterwards, and whilst thinking of the mystery of the Crucifixion, I saw a beautiful, steady light, somewhat resembling a star, glide slowly from the canopy of the high altar towards the arch of a window on the sanctuary wall, and then vanish. This light, or star, continued visible for about six seconds; it was exceedingly beautiful, and altogether unlike anything I had ever seen before. At this time I saw a large, bright cross, which continued visible for fully half an hour. I could discern no figure on this cross.

When I saw the star, I knelt down, and after a quarter of an hour spent in prayer I beheld distinctly a second star, exactly similar to the first, and moving apparently in the same direction. There was no mistaking the supernatural character of these stars. After seeing the second star I became slightly agitated, and begged that I might see no more, lest I should give public expression to my feelings. I remained kneeling for an hour and a half, experiencing the whole time a fervour and a happiness which would be difficult here to describe.

I must here digress a little and state that I had been suffering for twelve months from an aggravated form of disease (for the removal or mitigation of which I underwent three unsuccessful operations, and a fourth was to have been attempted), and during all this time I could not walk without the aid of a stick; but, above all, I found it exceedingly painful to kneel—even for a few moments. After seeing the stars (as related above) on Good Friday morning, I knelt for an hour and a half without experiencing the least pain or uneasiness from the affected part. I then concluded that I had been miraculously cured. Next day I discarded the services of the stick, and can walk ever since with perfect freedom, and can kneel during the whole time of Mass without the slightest pain or uneasiness. For this my cure, which dates from Good Friday morning, I feel I cannot ever be sufficiently devout to the "Comfortress of the Afflicted," the Blessed Mother of God, to whose intercession I attribute this favour.

The representation of the Crucifixion became manifest about one o'clock a.m. on Good Friday morning, and the first star about half an hour afterwards.

About half-past two a lady who had been contemplating the vision of the Crucifixion, gave public expression to her feelings, and directed fervent aspirations to our Lord on the cross, who, she said, was bleeding. She continued her aspirations aloud about ten minutes, and during this time and for an hour afterwards the intense religious fervour of the whole congregation was simply indescribable. Almost all were moved to tears—some striking their breasts in sorrow for sin; others giving vent to the most burning aspirations of love, or pathetically appealing to our Lord for mercy.

During the night some one pointed out to me the figure of a lamb, with a cross on its back. The outline of the lamb seemed well defined; the cross, however was hardly distinguishable.

Later on, a vision of which I could only distinguish the heads became visible on the side wall of the sanctuary (it was on this wall the vision of the Crucifixion was said to have been seen). Others also saw the figures of these heads; but it was not until the following night that I could understand their signification.

On Good Friday, at about ten o'clock p.m., I took up a position—as on the previous night—close to the Virgin's altar. I remained in the church during the night. The representation of the heads above referred to was still visible; but its signification was yet involved in mystery.

At the Gospel side of the sanctuary a girl was kneeling, evidently contemplating something supernatural. Some one asked me to beg of her not to distress herself, adding that she had been kneeling for several hours. I approached the girl with the intention of requesting her to sit up; but before I could speak to her she fainted, and was removed from the church.

Whilst at the Gospel side, I saw on the wall—near where the vision appeared of which the heads only were distinguishable—a magnificent red light. I then returned to my place, and immediately the full representation of the "Taking down from the Cross" became manifest on the sanctuary wall; one of the heads representing that of our Lord, the other that of a man—Joseph of Arimathea or Nicodemus, as I thought—taking Him down from the Cross. I then saw distinctly the representation of our Lord's head, shoulders, and sacred body. A remarkably distinct wound was visible on His left side; it was about an inch and a half long, and half an inch wide. The sides of the wound were even, as if it had been caused by a sharp instrument. Over the wound were black marks resembling drops of blood. Our Lord's body exhibited marks of intense suffering; and

the limbs fell helplessly, as one would expect of the members of a dead body. At first I did not see our Lord's right hand; but a female near me having exclaimed, "Oh! He has His right hand on His heart!" I at once saw the right hand of the Redeemer laid on His sacred breast. At our Lord's feet there appeared a beautiful figure of a woman, which I believe to have been that of the Blessed Virgin. Her looks indicated sorrow and anxiety; her arms being outstretched as if to receive the sacred body of her Divine Son. The Virgin's right side was turned towards the centre of the church. Our Lord's head hung slightly down. His face was to the altar, as also that of the man taking Him down from the Cross. Of these representations our Lord's body was the most distinct; next in the order of distinctness was that of the Blessed Virgin; whilst only the head, neck, and parts of the shoulders and arms of the figure representing Nicodemus were visible, the rest of his body being shaded by that of our Blessed Lord. At one time the figures of this representation appeared in very striking relief; I lost sight of the wall on which, till then, they appeared to rest; and now the vision made a vivid impression on me—so much so that I imagine I could scarcely have been more impressed had I seen the great mystery enacted on Calvary. Naturally I compassionated our Blessed Lord, reduced to this helpless condition through His love for man.

EXPLORATION OF MEXICO.

M. Desiré Charnay, the French *savant* who is at the head of the scientific expedition party, arranged by M. Pierre Lorillard for study of the remains of the ancient Mexican civilisation, has left New York for Mexico, to commence work. At Philadelphia he had an interview with the Mexican Minister, who, although he could give no definite promise, expressed a hope that no difficulties would be placed in the way of M. Charnay's labours. M. Charnay desires to correct the false impression that he means to carry off any of the original monuments from Mexico. He has no intention of doing this should the Mexican Government have any objection; but he hopes to take impressions and mouldings of reliefs and historical inscriptions, to which there can be no objection. These reproductions, as well as numerous photographs, will form at Paris a special collection, under the Minister of Public Instruction, and which will receive the name of the Lorillard Museum. The expense of the expedition will be shared between the French Government and M. Lorillard. The campaign will last probably two, perhaps three years, of which one will be spent in Yucatan, where there is much to do, and the remainder in various excursions to Oaxaca, Catape, Palangua, &c. M. Charnay has already done exploring work in Mexico. In 1857 he visited Mexico and Central America, and took photographs of the temples, monuments and tombs of Mitla, Palenque, Chichen-Itza, and many other interesting points, and on his return to France published an atlas along with a volume entitled, "Cités et Ruines Américaines." Mr. Thordike Rice, the editor of the *North American Review*, at present in London, has negotiated with the French Government, on behalf of M. Lorillard, all the details necessary to the execution of the project. The expense is expected to amount to 300,000*fr.* The journal of the expedition will be published in the *North American Review*. M. Charnay himself, in a communication to the *Herald* states that there are six provinces in which he proposes to search for traces of the unknown people who lived there long before the Aztecs, or even before the other races or tribes called Otomies, Chechimecs, Olmecs, of which hitherto only the scantiest remains have been found. He states that he will endeavour to bargain with the Mexican Government for a share of the remains that may be discovered, but that, at all events, exact models of all the objects will be prepared, both for the French Government and for M. Lorillard, who has shown himself exceedingly generous in connection with the project. A detailed plan of the expedition, M. Charnay states, is to be shortly published in France, Germany, England, and America.—*Times*.

There is likely to be some trouble between England and the United States, unless the present English Cabinet should resolve to repudiate the acts of its predecessor in the matter of the Fortune Bay fishery question. The American Secretary of State has just published a report on the present state of this question, which may be briefly summarised. The United States fishermen having rights of fishing near Newfoundland, under the Treaty of Washington, found themselves impeded by the local legislative regulations of that colony and forcibly stopped on certain occasions. Mr. Evarts complained to Lord Salisbury, who replied that he could not override the local laws of Newfoundland. To this Mr. Evarts answered that the Washington Treaty with England was above Newfoundland law; but Lord Salisbury rejoined that the Treaty must be understood to be qualified by the local laws existing at the time. Mr. Evarts does not accept this view. He recommends, in the first place, retaliation by the reimposition of duties on the products of Canadian fisheries as they existed before the Washington Treaty; and, secondly, an examination and audit of the pecuniary claims of the United States fishermen who allege themselves aggrieved, with a view to ultimate provision for their compensation being exacted from England. President Hayes, it may be added, has sent the Secretary's report to Congress, with a suggestion that that body should act upon its recommendation.—*Nation*.

The names of visitors to the Benedictine Monastery of Monte Cassino are written in Books that are carefully preserved by the Monks, and these volumes in time become historic curiosities. The archivist of the monastery is always proud to show the name of Cardinal Newman, in 1847, with a very beautiful Latin petition for the prayers of the Saints of Monte Cassino. Mr. Gladstone's name is entered in 1866, with the word "Floreat," and to his name is appended that of the Marquis of Lorne. Renan writes in it what it may be supposed he would not write now—*Unum est necessarium. Maria optimam partem elegit, &c.* It is dated February, 1850. Dean Stanley's name occurs as having twice visited the abbey.