

*The Catholic Church is far
more dreaded by the Devil
than by God Himself*



The Catholic Church is far more dreaded by the Devil than by God Himself.

Those capable of believing in a just and omnipotent deity are unable to believe in a Devil. This absurd and cruel dogma has made the Western world lose all hope and faith in religion.

First published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, No. 7, April 1883, pp. 160-61; No. 9, June, 1883, pp. 223-24; No. 11, August 1883, pp. 272-73. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (BY "BELL, BOOK, AND CANDLE") IV pp. 387-91. Leaves from the notebook of a missionary priest.

Not with the object of vindicating the Asiatic people from any charge of superstition that may lie against them, but only to show that in Western countries under all their boasted enlightenment, the self-same belief in demoniac obsession obtains as among them, we have heretofore cited cases which have appeared in current literature similar to the very curious one we now quote. The narrative is taken from the *Catholic Mirror*, a most conservative journal of the Romish Church in America; in fact, as it announces itself:

Official Organ of the Archbishop of Baltimore, Bishops of Richmond and Wilmington, and the Vicar-Apostolic of North Carolina.

What it admits is, therefore, not to be coughed down or put aside; its voice is that of authority. The strong mediaeval flavour which pervades the present story adds a greater zest to it. Its chief value to the intelligent psychologist is in showing:

- 1 That the phenomenon of so-called obsession survives to our day, despite scientific progress;
- 2 That the possibility of overcoming the abnormal condition by means of rituals and prayers (*mantras*) is claimed by the Church to be true;
- 3 That the self-same abnormal psycho-physiological symptoms show themselves in Christian and heathen countries, where almost identical remedies are employed.

In the one case the power of exorcism is claimed as a divine gift from the Christian god, and in the other as coming from the god Rama, conqueror of Rāvana; that is all. And if exorcism be impossible by Hindu priests in India, it must be equally impossi-

ble by [388] Romish priests in Canada or at Rome. For *Hysteria* is the obsessing devil in both instances.

We have a certain respect for sceptics who laugh with equal scorn at the credulity of phenomenalists whether inside or outside their own Church. But our feeling is quite the reverse for those who, while making merry at the expense of all others for credulity, are ready to swallow identical stories if alleged by their own ecclesiastics to be miraculous. The most staggering recitals of occult phenomena that have been taken from “heathen” sources into our journal, do not surpass, if they equal, the report of this missionary priest in the elements of credulity, blind faith, and impossibility; and yet, the Occultist will no more deny the essential facts of this case than those of the others. We will watch with amused curiosity the tone that will be assumed by our critics in speaking of *this* affair. The reader will bear in mind that henceforward it is the editor of the *Catholic Mirror* who is telling the story. Such comments as we may have to make will be confined to the footnotes:

[The article in question is a very long account of a case of diabolical possession. Only the paragraphs on which H.P. Blavatsky comments are reprinted here:]

Many persons hardly believe in the devil at all, from believing so little in God. Although the reality of diabolical possessions is a truth which the Holy Scripture abundantly establishes, there are many who scout the idea of devils being permitted to be on this earth of ours.

We think it due to quite another reason. Those capable of sincerely believing in a just and *omnipotent* deity are unable to believe in a Devil. If anything has been calculated to make the Western world lose all faith in Religion, it is this absurd and cruel dogma which enforces upon all Christians belief in the Devil.

Archbishop Vaughan has said somewhere: “As men get misty in their notions of the God-man, they become vague in their belief in him whose power that God came to crush.”

And why could he not have crushed the power of the Devil without moving from heaven? Why should “that God” have had to “come” to our earth? He was not here already, then, before the year *one*? So there was at least one entire [389] globe where God was not present, despite the claim of his Omnipresence. And if he created everything in the heavens above as well as in the earth beneath, why did he create such a devil?

It was prophesied by our blessed Lord that the casting out of devils would be one of the signs that shall *follow them that believe*.

And the words: “In my name shall they cast out devils”¹ are followed by these others — “they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” This is, we are told, what Jesus promised to “them that believe.” Having known Christian orthodox exorcisers and many other persons who “believed” most sincerely, we yet have never met one, least of all a *padri*, who would consent to either drink a glass of poison, or take a cobra by its tail. Why is this? The “casting

¹ *Mark* xvi, 17-18

out of the devils” is only one of the signs that should “follow them that believe.” Is it because faith is but one-fifth of what it used to be?

[The patient to whom the priest was called was a young girl who declared: “I am the devil.” The priest asked “in the name of Jesus Christ” why he had taken possession of the girl, but he refused to answer until commanded “in the name of *the Catholic Church*.”]

The “Catholic Church,” then, we are given to understand, is more powerful, and more to be dreaded by the Devil than God Himself!!

All devils in the Christian Hell are Jewish.

[The devil later enumerates his various names, the fourteenth being Beelzebub.]

Oh, poor and silly devil! — A very suggestive fact, indeed, that none of the names of the demons and devils accepted by Christian theology have any other than a Jewish ring about them. All the devils in the Christian Hell seem to be Jews. This is rather flattering for the Heathen — Hindu, Buddhist, and Parsi. Notwithstanding the countless myriads, that agreeably to the Christian Churches must by this time, have gone to Hell, we do not find a single “Babu” or “Bhoy” among the obsessing devils, while here we have even a “Jonas.” Will the good *padris*, please explain? [390]

[On one occasion he went to the girl after hearing confessions at a distant church, and “she said something that filled me with surprise and horror.”]

The *demon*, or rather hysterical girl being a *clairvoyante*, repeated to him what he had heard at confession.

[With regard to possessed animals, he sprinkled some horses with holy water and “they began to get excited as though worried by a thousand horseflies.”]

Now this statement of “possessed horses” and the effect of holy water upon them implies more than it says. It is positively charming, and reminds one of the *Golden Legends*¹ in which the reader meets with a wolf and a dragon converted to Christianity and weeping over their sins.

Sometimes possession is the fault of the victim, sometimes the result of magical dealings with the devil, and sometimes trials by permission of God without any fault on the part of the person, as in the case of this girl. This is easily explained in the answer of our Divine Lord to His disciples with reference to the man born blind. *Rabbi, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered: Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*²

Rather than believe in *such* a “God,” many good men have ceased to believe in one at all. It is against the *interpretations* of the words of Jesus of Nazareth and not the

¹ [Jacobus de Voragine, c.1230–c.1828. *Golden Legend of the Lombardica historia*, one of the most popular religious works of the Middle Ages, a collection of the legendary lives of the greater Saints. Ed. by Dr. Th. Graesse, Dresden, 1846. See Vol. II, p. 532, for further data about the author and his works. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

² *John ix*, 2-3 [Consult “The Origin of Good and Evil” and “The Original Sin is a Jewish Invention,” in our Black versus White Magic Series. — ED. PHIL.]

words themselves (which mean quite a different thing) that so many ex-Christians have rebelled.

[The priest said Mass in the house by special permission and gave the girl Holy Communion. After that, in another room, he raised his hand to make the sign of the Cross and saw that “the floor was literally covered with little, white, living worms (maggots), and some were even climbing the walls.”]

Spontaneous generation? A clever and scientific devil that!

[He asked why there were no worms in the other room where Mass had been said. The voice answered: “*Because we are not worthy to be where Jesus Christ is.*”]

This answer would make the sceptically inclined infer that Christ must, in such a case, be very often absent from his Church, since it is sometimes near the very altars and during the ceremony of public exorcisms, that the devil has [391] manifested himself most fiercely in those he gets possession of: witness the Nuns of Loudun?

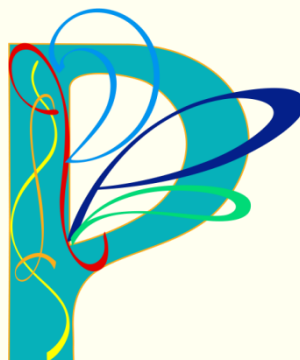
[A medical doctor — a Lutheran — was permitted to see the girl, and asked her if she knew Luther. “Yes,” came the answer, “he is with us.”]

Now this is the most charming hit possible at the poor Protestants. Behold, the Christian brotherly love and charity!

Sometimes the devil speaks against himself, and works for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, which is always the design of God in permitting possessions.

And if so, then *such* a devil must be as good as any missionary or priest? After this authoritative assertion, how shall we be able to know who is preaching — a *padri* or the . . . ?

This narrative, given by a good Roman Catholic *padri*, evidently sincere and truthful, and published in an authorized orthodox Christian journal, the *Catholic Mirror*, strikes for us the keynote of Christian theology. This is authoritative, good, sound, orthodox Christianity; and he who believes in it will *not be damned*, but on the contrary will be honoured and respected in society. That which Theosophy teaches is all the reverse. Our philosophy is hooted at, and the orthodox believers in a personal devil will turn away with a shudder of horror from the theosophic teachings. We are in the nineteenth century, in the full blaze of civilization and science, we see.



Suggested reading for students.



She being dead, yet speaketh.

- BLAVATSKY ABOUT TO UNVEIL ISIS
- BLAVATSKY AGAINST ECCLESIASTICAL CHRISTIANITY
- BLAVATSKY AGAINST SPIRITUALISM
- BLAVATSKY CUTS DOWN TO SIZE A CARPING CRITIC OF HETERODOXY
- BLAVATSKY CUTS DOWN TO SIZE THE VENERABLE SWAMI OF ALMORA
- BLAVATSKY DEFENDS BUDDHISM IN CEYLON
- BLAVATSKY DEFENDS ISIS UNVEILED
- BLAVATSKY ENLIGHTENS HER READERS
- BLAVATSKY ENLIGHTENS THE SCEPTICS OF HER MOTHERLAND
- BLAVATSKY EXPELS A FRIEND OF COMMUNISTS
- BLAVATSKY HATED BALLS
- BLAVATSKY ON A CASE OF OBSESSION
- BLAVATSKY ON A HEAVY CURSE
- BLAVATSKY ON ANIMAL SOULS
- BLAVATSKY ON BULGARIAN SUN WORSHIP
- BLAVATSKY ON CHRISTMAS AND THE CHRISTMAS TREE
- BLAVATSKY ON ELEMENTALS AND ELEMENTARIES
- BLAVATSKY ON FOETICIDE BEING A CRIME AGAINST NATURE
- BLAVATSKY ON HINDU WIDOW-BURNING
- BLAVATSKY ON IRISH TALISMANS
- BLAVATSKY ON JESUITRY IN MASONRY
- BLAVATSKY ON MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND CELIBACY
- BLAVATSKY ON NEBO OF BIRS-NIMRUD
- BLAVATSKY ON OCCULT ALPHABETS AND NUMERALS

BLAVATSKY SPEAKS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- BLAVATSKY ON OCCULT VIBRATIONS
- BLAVATSKY ON OLD AGE
- BLAVATSKY ON OLD DOCTRINES VINDICATED BY NEW PROPHETS
- BLAVATSKY ON PLATO’S TIMÆUS
- BLAVATSKY ON PROGRESS AND CULTURE
- BLAVATSKY ON RELIGIOUS DEFORMITIES
- BLAVATSKY ON RITUALISM IN CHURCH AND MASONRY
- BLAVATSKY ON SHAMBHALA, THE HAPPY LAND
- BLAVATSKY ON SPINOZA AND WESTERN PHILOSOPHERS
- BLAVATSKY ON SUNDAY DEVOTION TO PLEASURE
- BLAVATSKY ON TEACHINGS OF ELIPHAS LEVI
- BLAVATSKY ON THE BOOGEYMEN OF SCIENCE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE BOOK OF ENOCH
- BLAVATSKY ON THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES IN INDIA
- BLAVATSKY ON THE DOOMED DESTINY OF THE ROMANOVS
- BLAVATSKY ON THE ELUCIDATION OF LONG-STANDING ENIGMAS
- BLAVATSKY ON THE HARMONICS OF SMELL
- BLAVATSKY ON THE HIDDEN ESOTERICISM OF THE BIBLE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE HISTORY AND TRIBULATIONS OF THE ZOHAR
- BLAVATSKY ON THE INTROVERSION OF MENTAL VISION
- BLAVATSKY ON THE KEY TO SPIRITUAL PROGRESS
- BLAVATSKY ON THE KNIGHTED OXFORD SANSKRITIST WHO COULD SPEAK NO SANSKRIT
- BLAVATSKY ON THE LETTERS OF LAVATER
- BLAVATSKY ON THE LUMINOUS CIRCLE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE MODERN NEGATORS OF ANCIENT SCIENCE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE MONSOON
- BLAVATSKY ON THE NEW YEAR AND FALSE NOSES
- BLAVATSKY ON THE NEW YEAR’S MORROW
- BLAVATSKY ON THE QABBALAH BY ISAAC MYER
- BLAVATSKY ON THE QUENCHLESS LAMPS OF ALCHEMY
- BLAVATSKY ON THE RATIONALE OF FASTS

BLAVATSKY SPEAKS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- BLAVATSKY ON THE ROOTS OF ZOROASTRIANISM
- BLAVATSKY ON THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE TEACHINGS OF ELIPHAS LEVI
- BLAVATSKY ON THE VISHISHTADVAITA PHILOSOPHY
- BLAVATSKY ON THEOSOPHY AND ASCETICISM
- BLAVATSKY ON WHETHER THE RISHIS EXIST TODAY
- BLAVATSKY REBUTS UNSPIRITUAL CONCEPTIONS ABOUT GOD
- BLAVATSKY UNMASKS THE TRINITY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
- BLAVATSKY'S LAST WORDS
- BLAVATSKY'S OPEN LETTER TO HER CORRESPONDENTS
- GEMS FROM THE EAST
- INDUCTIVE REASONING LEADS TO FAKE DEDUCTIONS
- MADAME BLAVATSKY ENLIGHTENS THE SCEPTICS OF HER MOTHERLAND
- MADAME BLAVATSKY ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL MIND OF THE CHINESE
- OBITUARY TO MIKHAIL NIKIFOROVICH KATKOV
- OBITUARY TO PUNDIT DAYANAND SARASWATI
- OCCULT PHILOSOPHY IS ANCIENT SPIRITUALISM
- OPEN LETTER TO THE AMERICAN SECTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
- OPEN LETTER TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
- OPEN LETTERS TO THE AMERICAN CONVENTION
- PAGES FROM ISIS UNVEILED
- PAGES FROM THE CAVES AND JUNGLES OF HINDOSTAN
- PAGES FROM THE SECRET DOCTRINE 1 - ABRIDGED
- PAGES FROM THE SECRET DOCTRINE 2 - FULL TEXT
- PANTHEISTIC THEOSOPHY IS IRRECONCILABLE WITH ROMAN CATHOLICISM
- ROSICRUCIANISM WAS AN OFFSHOOT OF ORIENTAL OCCULTISM
- ROSICRUCIANS EMERGED AS AN ANTIDOTE TO THE MATERIAL SIDE OF ALCHEMY
- THE HERMETIC FIRE OF THE MIND IS THE KEY TO THE OCCULT SCIENCES
- THE REAL MEANING OF THE FIRST LINE OF GENESIS
- THE SECRET DOCTRINE (1888) VOL. 1 OF 2 ON COSMOGENESIS
- THE SECRET DOCTRINE (1888) VOL. 2 OF 2 ON ANTHROPOGENESIS
- THOTH IS THE EQUIVALENT OF HERMES AND MOSES

BLAVATSKY SPEAKS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER ON CRITICISM AND AUTHORITIES
- UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER ON THE EIGHTH WONDER
- UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER ON THE MORNING STAR
- WE ARE MORE OFTEN VICTIMS OF WORDS RATHER THAN OF FACTS
- WITHOUT THE REVIVAL OF ARYAN PHILOSOPHY, THE WEST WILL FALL TO EVEN GROSSER MATERIALISM

