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AMERICA OVERRUN BY SAVAGE HORDES IN 1914?

The Many Amazing Predictions of "The Nun of Viterbo," Which Have Come Strangely True, Capped by a Deathbed Prophecy of Incredible Disaster to the United States

Rome, June 24.

"THE HOLY NUN OF VITERBO," Sister Maria Benedetta, who has just passed away, enjoyed a tremendous fame throughout Italy for her success in predicting coming events.

Her power was usually exercised with the object of averting misfortune from people or preparing them for inevitable disaster. Hundreds of people were enabled to escape from the Messina earthquake through her warning, and in many other cases her admonitions were timely. This gave her a great reputation for sanctity, and she was particularly beloved among the poor and simple peasants.

One of the most remarkable predictions ever made by the nun related to America and was uttered on her deathbed. The extraordinary and unquestioned accuracy of many of her previous predictions gives added interest to this very alarming statement. Are we to believe that the nun's mind was disordered by her last illness, or was her prophetic faculty sharpened by the near approach of death?

This is the terrifying statement which the dying nun is said to have made to visitors just before her death:

"Trouble is coming from the East. The Yellow Peril threatens the world, but it is against America that it will be first directed. Prepare to defend yourselves to the last gasp."

"Before two years are past—about the end of 1914—yellow invaders and negroes will be throwing dice for the last American girl in Central Park, New York, amid the smoking ruins of the great city, given up to the idolatrous cult of the Golden Calf."

"But true-hearted Americans will make a brave stand

nurse, who grew old by her bedside and died before her, said she never even heard her sigh.

People of all ranks crowded to her bedside for years to ask her help in time of trouble, or else out of curiosity to hear her remarkable prophecies.

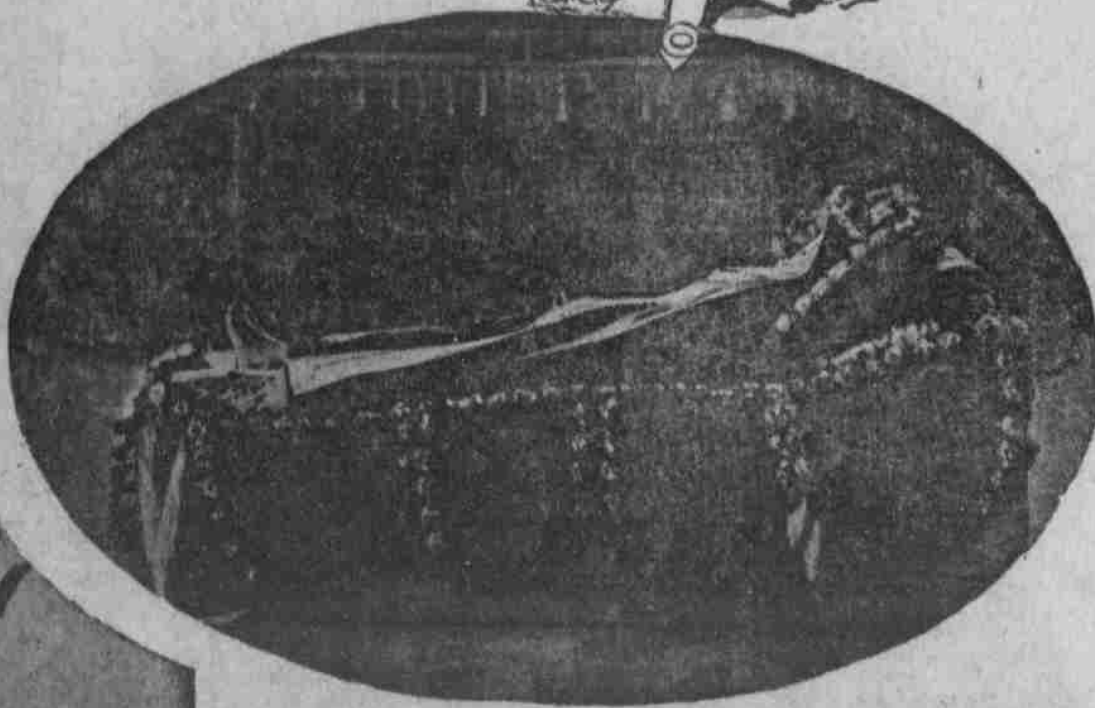
The room in which the nun lived and suffered was as bare as a prison cell. Its only ornaments were a crucifix on the wall and a small image of the Saviour, which she kept near her bed and for which she had a special veneration. It is stated that when unbelievers went to see her out of curiosity, she would show them this image and a strange change would come over them.

The prediction that raised her fame to the highest pitch throughout Italy foretold the assassination of King Humbert at Monza, on July 29, 1890.

On July 29 the Mother Abbess of Sister Maria Bene-



"About the end of 1914 yellow invaders and negroes will be throwing dice for the last American girl in Central Park, New York."



warning carefully and, although the Grand Duke was the most hated of all the Russian rulers, he went unharmed for many months.

On February 4, 1905, the nun said:

"Tell the Russian Grand Duchess that her husband is in great peril to-day."

The warning came too late, for on that day the Grand Duke Sergius, who treated his wife with great harshness, went out without her, in spite of her warnings, and was blown to shreds by Nihilist bombs.

Warnings were repeatedly sent from the nun to King Alfonso of Spain telling him to be on his guard against assassins and revolutionaries. A timely message was sent to him the day before his wedding, and this is said to have enabled him to escape the murderous attack which killed so many of his suite and subjects on that day.

Sister Maria Benedetta, the Nun of Viterbo, as She Appeared When Lying in Death and Viewed by Many Thousands of Italians Who Venerated Her Prophetic Power.

The King always paid respectful heed to the warnings, and, although he never ran away from danger, it is stated that being on his guard enabled him to make the slight movement needed to put him beyond danger on many desperate occasions.

The nun warned King Carlos of Portugal that a plot was being formed against him, but the stout, jovial monarch replied:

"Thanks, very much; but I can take care of myself."

The King, who was killed with his son on February 1, 1908, was a first cousin of the King of Italy. His mother, who was a sister of the late King Humbert, was deeply impressed by the nun's message, but failed to produce any effect on her son.

The forecasts and warnings of the nun at the time of the dreadful Messina earthquake did more than anything else to make her beloved by the common people. On December 27, 1908, she spoke more impressively and tragically than she had ever done before, saying:

"Woe to the people of Sicily. A dreadful catastrophe

is coming to them. It will be worse than anything they have known in their long tragic history. Woe to Messina! The beautiful city will be destroyed. I see death, devastation, famine, pestilence everywhere. Tell the poor people to fly while there is yet time. Let them leave everything they possess and save their lives."

The nun had by that time a great reputation, and her warning, which came the day before the disaster, was serviceable in inducing many hundreds to escape or else to make timely preparations to leave the doomed area.

Another prediction which made the nun a venerated character throughout Italy related to the war with Turkey. A party of young recruits, ordered to join the colors long before war had been decided on, visited the nun to ask her blessing. To them she said:

"A war is coming. I see scenes of bloodshed and agony on burning, sandy plains. But it will be a glorious war. It will be the first glorious war in which Italy has fought. It will be a war of the Cross against the Crescent, and the Cross will be victorious. Some of you will never return, but do not be afraid, for you will meet a death that will be better than years of sordid misery and labor. Fight bravely and do not shrink from death. He that tries hardest to lose his life shall keep it."

"For you, young man (here the nun turned her eyes on a very handsome young soldier), I see a splendid military career and a long and happy life."

When the war actually broke out her popularity became enormous. She was constantly visited by soldiers going to the war and by the mothers, wives and relatives of those who had gone.

The mothers and wives of the soldiers usually asked the nun to pray for her loved ones. She would ask for the names of the soldiers for whom she was requested to pray, and after thinking a while replied, either bidding her visitor to hope or gently suggesting that the soldier would fall gloriously in the fight for his country and his faith.

It is declared that she never made a single mistake, and thousands of persons are ready to give evidence that whenever she told them to hope, their sons, husbands and relatives at the post were not killed.

The nun's answer to ill-judged requests for information about the future frequently had a character of dry humor. During the famous Camorra trial, Don Ciro Vitozzi, who was particularly forceful and dramatic in protesting his innocence, sent to ask her if he would be acquitted. She sent back this message:

"If you are innocent, you will certainly be acquitted."

The Nun's mind and supposed powers of second-sight tended to deal principally with death, war, disasters and tragic occurrences. She is credited with having foretold the Franco-German war of 1870, the entry of the Italian army into Rome, which occurred in the same year, the assassination of President Carnot of France and the Empress Elisabeth of Austria, the deaths of the Emperor Frederick of Germany and of King Edward of England, the Titanic disaster and many other tragedies of world-wide interest.

It is widely believed that she has foretold further disasters to the Italian royal family as a punishment for keeping the Pope out of his temporal possessions in Rome. Much secrecy is maintained upon this point, but she is said to have sent the following message to the Dowager Queen Margherita:

"As long as the House of Savoy rules in Rome, death and disaster will attend it. Remove the throne to another city and new glory will crown your house."

The nun predicted her own death a week ahead. On the morning of the day she had fixed, she called the Abbess and the other nuns to her cell and begged their forgiveness. She passed away at the very hour she had foretold.

The room in which she died was left exactly as she had used it and was sealed up by order of the Bishop of Viterbo. Every article left by the nun will be carefully preserved for the veneration of this and future generations.

Scientific men are greatly interested in the nun's case. While not ready to accept every feat attributed to her, they are inclined to believe that she possessed supernatural psychical powers. Her nervous system was in an entirely abnormal condition. Many of her nervous centres, which would have been used in a normal existence, were destroyed by the disease that afflicted her and it is conceivable that the remaining nervous centres had developed powers not possessed by those of ordinary persons. Her sense of hearing, for instance, was acute to an almost incredible degree.

Those who take this view think that the disturbance of the earth caused by the Messina earthquake, several hundred miles away, may have been perceptible to her. The other cases are, of course, more difficult to explain, but it is suggested that she learned much from the actions of those who came to make inquiries of her.



"The Nun sent word to the Grand Duchess Sergius that her husband would be killed if he went in public without her. He disobeyed the warning and was assassinated February 4, 1905."

for their race in the interest of their country. I see a great battle upon a vast plain by a great lake. I cannot see how it will end."

It must be admitted that this blood-curdling prediction hardly seems like an outpouring of holiness, yet if the nun, in her strange, psychic condition, saw such things about to happen, what could she do but utter them? Doubtless she felt it her duty to warn Americans. Her prediction has been widely published here and is implicitly believed by hundreds of thousands, probably by millions of people.

The nun's name was Maria Benedetta Frey. She was born in Rome in 1836 and brought up in a convent of the Cistercian nuns. At the age of twenty-one she refused an offer of marriage, and then, having shown a deeply religious bent of mind, joined the Cistercian order. After two years of novitiate she became a professed nun and took up her residence at Viterbo, near Rome.

In 1881 she was stricken with paralysis of the spine, which kept her a helpless, suffering cripple for the rest of her life. It was after this attack that she developed her gift of prophecy. She lived for fifty-two years after her attack, and her fame increased during all this time. Sister Maria Benedetta spent more than half a century with her head tightly bandaged and supported by a steel frame fixed at both ends of her bed. She endured a continual martyrdom, but she never complained. Her

detta's convent informed the sub-Prefect of Viterbo, a Government official, that the sister had had a vision of King Humbert's assassination. The official wired to Rome for information and received word that nothing had happened to the King. As a matter of fact, the officials in Rome had not then received news of the King's death. He was stabbed late in the afternoon by Gaetano Breschi, an anarchist, and died within an hour in the castle of Monza.

The extraordinary inquiry from Viterbo gave rise to the belief that the plot against the King must have been hatched there, but investigation showed that there was no ground for this. Breschi plotted the King's assassination in Paterson, New Jersey. The widowed Queen Margherita soon afterward visited the nun and was greatly impressed by her gifts of second sight and prophecy. The Queen became one of her staunchest believers and helped to spread her fame throughout Europe.

Ten years ago the Pope allowed the nun to receive visitors in her room, thus relaxing the rule of the Cistercian Order that strangers can speak to the nuns only through an iron grating.

At the time the revolutionary disturbances were acute in Russia, the nun told Queen Margherita that her friend, the Grand Duchess Sergius of Russia, should never let her husband go alone in public, or he would be killed. The Grand Duchess followed her



"A dreadful catastrophe is coming to Sicily. Woe to you people of Messina! Fly for your lives! The Nun's warning the day before the Messina earthquake is said to have been the means of saving hundreds of lives."