

EDITORIAL

FATHER DIETZ A CONJURER?

By DANIEL DE LEON

IN his avowed sermon before the A.F. of L. convention, now sitting in Rochester, Father Peter Dietz of the Flying Wedge of the Roman Catholic political hierarchy named “Militia of Christ,” indicated intimate familiarity on his part with the will, the plans, the business, the ways of God. Father Dietz told in detail what “God has in his mind;” how “God had made his almighty will plain” to him, the Rev. Father; what “God’s supreme business in the universe” is; what “the law of God” is. And the Rev. Father extended his approval to the said mind, plan, will, business and law, by bestowing upon them the praise of “intelligent.”

The reporter for the *Daily People* observes that the applause of the faithful “was not vigorous,” he even expresses the opinion that the Rev. Father “overshot the mark,” and his sermon “acted like a boomerang.” This is possible. Nevertheless, we are inclined to account with another theory for the stunned mental state into which Father Dietz threw his favorites in audience. We are rather inclined to believe that, as Father Dietz spoke, the air in the convention hall grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer swung by seraphim whose footfalls lightly pattered around two majestic shades that stalked over the heads of the delegates—two shades whom Father Dietz’s words had conjured from their Elysian seclusion—the shades of Lincoln and of Montaigne.

On a certain occasion during the darkest days of the Civil War, when Bourbon treason in the North and military inexperience at the front made the Nation’s fate to tremble in the scales, and the great heart of Lincoln to be racked with apprehension;—on that occasion a delegation of parsons appeared at the White House, and one after another of the members delivered “in the name of God” a special message upon how to conduct the war. The Lincoln, who was then already undergoing the preliminary pangs of his final martyrdom, listened patiently; and then, with deep-

set eyes beaming upon the delegation, said: “Gentlemen, it must be a great comfort for a man to have had an interview directly with the Almighty.”

Michael de Montaigne, the great Montaigne, takes, in the greatest of his great philosophic satires against presumptuous bunkum,—takes over his knees and handles with deserved roughness those affectors of zeal and piety who presume to wrest the “will of God” so as to favor their own pride and arrogance, and accommodate the same to the requirements of their own fortuitous mental and physical imperfections.

What but stunned must not the Militia-of-Christers at the A.F. of L. convention have been by the total eclipse that their incantationist fogleman Peter Dietz suffered when the giant shades of the giant personalities of Lincoln and Montaigne invaded the convention hall, whether intentionally, or unintentionally conjured up?

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded May 2014

slpns@slp.org