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London, Saturday, December 16, 1899

REV. DR. DE COSTA.

From the Catholic Columbian, of Columbus, Ohio, we learn that Rev. Dr. B. F. De Costa was received into the Catholic Church on Sunday, the 2nd inst. The ceremony took place at the Academy of the Sacred Heart on West Sixteenth St., New York, in the presence of only a few of the doctor's friends, Protestant and Catholic.

Dr. De Costa is now in retreat at Fordham College. To Father Campbell, president of Fordham, is credited, under the grace of God, the final conversion of Dr. De Costa.

POLYGAMY vs. DIVORCE.

Congressman-elect Brigham H. Roberts of Utah made quite a point recently in a return upon the Presbyterian and other Ministerial Associations which are demanding his exclusion from Congress. He said that there are far greater dangers to the American home than threaten it from the Utah valley.

We do not and cannot in any way defend the evil which Mormonism has entailed upon a large area of the South Western States, yet even polygamy has not inflicted upon the United States evils so great as those which have been brought upon the country by the divorce laws. In fact, there is practically but little essential difference between the polygamy of Utah and the polygamy which divorces produce. Both bring about the same alienation of parents from their children, and vice versa, and the same relaxation of the ties of kindred between parents and children, brothers and sisters, etc. It may even be safely asserted that the evils of divorce are greater, both because the alienation of members of the same family and the discord generated between families are greater in the case of divorce than in the case of polygamy.

Divorce and divorce laws, in fact, owe their existence to Protestantism, and as Protestantism dominates more States than Mormonism, the evils of divorce are by so much the more widely spread throughout the country. A man who, like Congressman Roberts, openly defends polygamy, is admittedly not fit to be a legislator over a Christian country; nevertheless among those who denounce him most vociferously there are certainly many as unfit as he is for that position, for the reason that they hold views on the subject of marriage which are quite as lax as those of the polygamist Congressman.

IRISH NATIONALISTS' RE UNION.

The Unity Conference called by Mr. Timothy Healy to meet in Dublin was a complete fiasco, as only nineteen members of the Irish Nationalists were present, sixteen being avowed followers of Mr. Healy himself, and the other three being free lances who are somewhat detached from all the parties into which the Nationalists are divided. The total number of Nationalists in the House of Parliament is eighty, so that those who attended the Conference are but a small fraction of those who are counted as Nationalists.

It might at first sight seem a matter of surprise that Mr. Healy should call a Unity Conference at all, as he has persistently held aloof from all the Conferences which have been hitherto called for the purpose of restoring the unity of the Nationalists, but his reason for calling such a Conference at the present time is patent to all. The fact is that the new United Irish League which was inaugurated by William O'Brien and Michael Davitt has gradually absorbed all the Irish political associations outside of Dublin, and is now the only Irish National society which wields any political power. Its policy is to sweep out of existence all the factions which now divide Irishmen, and to construct one National party. The Healyites feel

that their party will be blotted out at the next general election, and they hoped to save the fragments by making the latest move, ostensibly for the restoration of unity, whereas it is known that they have no desire for the real unity of the party. The bulk of the Nationalists who have followed Mr. Dillon's lead have therefore no confidence in Mr. Healy's professions, and they cannot be blamed for keeping aloof from a meeting which was evidently held for the purpose of putting Mr. Healy at the head of the movement which he has already betrayed.

The Nationalists proper, who followed Mr. Dillon as long as he was the recognized leader, are not willing to throw themselves now headlong under Mr. Healy's guidance though the majority party are now in a disorganized state, as no leader has been elected since Mr. Dillon's resignation. Whether rightly or wrongly it is believed that it is better that the party should remain disorganized until after the election, as it is impossible to effect anything for Ireland under present circumstances, as in such a state of things the people of Ireland will be able to elect a National representation unfettered by any binding them to any leader. It may thus be seen, when a caucus of Nationalists will be called to organize for the meeting of the next Parliament, who will be the men to throw obstacles in the way of the formation of a united party, and those who persist in so doing may be safely thrown overboard as enemies to the cause which Ireland holds dear. This seems now to be the only course which affords a hope that a united National party will be formed to urge again as forcibly as possible the claims of Ireland to self government and Home Rule.

Neither the Redmondites nor the Healyites can be relied on to promote the cause of Ireland. Nevertheless, it is still to be feared that Dublin, which is to a great extent under the thumb of the Castle officials, will not second the efforts of the country in general to create once more a united party. But even should Dublin fall in its duty, it may reasonably be expected that the voice of the country will be heard above the din of contending factions, and will give the key note of union which Dublin itself will not dare to despise. We may therefore hope that the day is not far distant when a united Irish party will secure for Ireland that justice which she demands.

TENDING TO BARBARISM.

A saddening and sickening sight was witnessed in Maysville, Kentucky, on the 7th inst. It was bad enough that the State should be disgraced by several family feuds which have been going on for years with the result that murders are being committed in succession by members of the families who are engaged in these feuds. It is also a lamentable fact that lynch law has taken the place of the authorized law of the land, but the last case of lynching has been one of the most brutal which has yet occurred in any State, both from the manner in which it was perpetrated, and from the participation in it of a number of children of tender age.

A negro named Richard Coleman, whose crime was indeed one of peculiar enormity, was caught by a mob and burned to death on a pile of wood, and his body was left unburied. Teeth and bones were taken by relic-hunters, and children of various ages, some being only six years old, gathered about the corpse and the funeral pile, collecting grass, brush, pieces of boards, and every other combustible on which they could lay their hands, to add to the fire and consume the blackened remains of the unfortunate victim. This work was kept up until only the skull and a few charred bones remained of the man on whom the unlawful punishment had been inflicted.

The coroner's jury rendered the verdict, "Death at the hands of a mob," and the remains of the body were left scattered around on the spot where they lay.

When we find children thus encouraged to take part in this unlawful transaction we may well prognosticate that the next generation in the State will be even more lawless than that of to-day. We cannot entertain a doubt that the condition of society existing in that and some other States where lynchings are a common occurrence, is the result of the godless education under which the present generation has sprung up, and we may well anticipate that the state of society will become more and more heathenish as time goes on until the country will equal in savagery the interior of Dark Africa.

The people of the neighborhood are

so lost to all sense of Christianity and respect for law and order, that the lynching is universally approved of with all its horrors, even the women joining with the men in this expression of sentiment, as they say that their lives and honor will be made more safe by the fear of similar treatment of future culprits.

"EVANGELICAL SAINT WORSHIP."

The Literary Digest for 2nd December, under the above title, calls attention to an "extraordinary development which is making its appearance in the very bosom of Protestantism," the phenomenon being "nothing less than the practice of prayer to the Saints," giving some extracts from the Living Church, an organ of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States which calls attention to this fact in its issue of November 4. It is well known to our readers that one of the doctrines of the Catholic Church which has been most virulently attacked is that the Saints in heaven assist us by their prayers, and that we may invoke them, or ask them to pray for us. This practice they stigmatize as "Saint-Worship," notwithstanding the well-known fact that Catholics make a vast distinction between prayers addressed to God, whom we ask for grace and mercy, and those addressed to the Saints, whom we ask only to intercede for us. This accounts for the title of the article in the Literary Digest.

That the Saints pray for us is a most reasonable doctrine, and is besides clearly taught in Holy Scripture. There is nothing more clearly laid down in Scripture than the doctrine that the prayers of the just on earth are powerful to obtain God's favor for those who are the object of such prayers. Thus when the three friends of Job had maintained that Job must have been guilty of some grievous crime on account of which he was afflicted by God, or that God had allowed him to be afflicted with tribulation, God Himself pronounced in Job's favor, that he had been afflicted to try his constancy, and not because of any crime, and required these friends to go to Job to beseech his intercession, because of Job's justice, and his having "spoken the thing that was right."

God therefore directs the friends to take offerings for a sacrifice, and to "go to My servant Job, and My servant Job shall pray for you: his face I will accept, that folly be not imputed to you; for you have not spoken right things before Me as my servant Job hath." (Job xlii, 8.)

The three friends did as God commanded, and "the Lord accepted the face of Job," that is, He extended His mercy, when "Job prayed for them." St. Paul also declares to the Romans (1: 9): "Without ceasing I make a commemoration of you always in my prayers. . . . for I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual grace to strengthen you."

The prayers of the just are therefore powerful with God, and bring grace and God's favor upon those for whom they are offered up. But there is no reason why the prayers of God's saints should be any less powerful when they are enjoying in heaven the reward of their labors. On the contrary the prayers of the saints in heaven must be still more powerful with their Divine Master than when they were on earth, and it is lawful for us and eminently useful to ask their intercession.

The saints in heaven are declared by Christ to be like the angels, and they are therefore equal to them in power before God. (St. Matt. xxiii, 30; St. Mark xii, 35) Yet nothing is more certain than that the angels of God pray for us. We read in Zacharias (1: 13) that an angel of God prayed for the people of Israel in their distressful captivity, and that "the Lord answered the angel that spoke in me good words, comfortable words." So also from Daniel xii, we learn that Michael the great prince, elsewhere named the archangel, "standeth for the children of thy people," which signifies that he prays for them and watches over their interests; "and at that time shall thy people be saved."

We have not, therefore, to blame those Protestants who are convinced that the prayers of the saints are efficacious before God; but the fact shows how greatly Protestantism has changed from its former self, as from the time of Luther down to the present day prayers offered to the saints to obtain their intercession have been denounced as acts of superstition and idolatry; and it is only of very recent date that some Protestants of prominence, beyond the Ritualistic party in

the Church of England, have discovered that reason and Scripture are in accord in justifying the offering up of prayers to those who are known to be the saints of God.

It is a curious feature in this new phase of Protestantism that it is not to the Mother of God, or the Apostles or martyrs, or other heroes of Christianity that prayers are now being offered up. The Catholic Church carefully guards her children against the superstition of offering up their prayers to ask the intercession of those whose sanctity is doubtful by prohibiting that the public prayers of the Church should be directed to any supposed Saints whose title to sanctity has not been approved by a formal decision of the Church, after a full and proper investigation into their claim to be regarded as Saints. But the new ideas among Protestants authorize any individual to canonize their own relatives or friends as they think proper. The Living Church says in regard to this that the Saints invoked "are not the Apostles and martyrs, and heroes of faith whom the Church has placed in her calendar, but the departed friends of the devotees."

It continues: "Dr. George Adam Smith in his Life of Henry Drummond mentions as a fact within his knowledge, that certain persons habitually address prayers to Henry Drummond. Dr. Joseph Parker of the City Temple, London, (not the Temple Church, a doubtful adversary of Popery and Prelacy) has openly declared that he prayed to his departed wife every day. He said that he never came to the City Temple to preach without asking her to come with him, and furthermore, he knew that she did come. Nor does he hold this as a mere sentiment applicable only to his own individual case, but alluding to a friend who had lost his wife, he says: 'I encourage my friend to pray to his wife, and to pray to God to ask her to come to his help. She will be more to him than twelve legions of angels.' Dr. Parker evidently has no use for 'the ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation.' Well may the Protestant paper from which we culled these instances say: 'All this is simply petrifying.' It mentions a Roman litany to the Saints and asks: 'Is this what we are going to come to in our Protestant Churches?'"

To the last question we may answer that these novel practices of Dr. Parker and the "worshippers" of Henry Drummond are far from the Catholic and "Roman" practice. The Catholic Church offers up prayers to the known saints of Christianity, the ever Blessed Mother of Jesus, and other well-known saints of God, whose sanctity has been attested by miracles wrought by God Himself, and not to the mothers and wives of fanciful devotees who think their individual judgment is superior to that of the Christian Church of nineteen centuries. Dr. Parker's wife may have been a very fair specimen of a good woman; but the Bible does not say of her that "all generations shall call her blessed," nor that "her name is written in the Book of Life," as it says in the case of St. Clement, who is another of those saints who are named in the Catholic litany referred to by the Episcopal Church organ.

A MEXICAN REPRESENTATION OF THE CRUCIFIXION.

A writer in the New York Assembly Herald, the authorized organ of the Presbyterian General Assembly of the United States, tells a sensational story of an idol which was obtained by a missionary in Mexico having been procured from the mother of a family who with her husband gave up her idolatry and "joined the Church," by which, of course, is meant the Presbyterian sect.

Our readers who know the methods of speech of Presbyterians will not be surprised to learn that the so-called idol was a representation or picture of Christ crucified, painted or carved on a wooden tablet.

This representation of the Crucifixion is said to have been "doubtless the work of a native or Mexican Indian catechumen in one of the monastic missions of the Roman Church which were numerous in the South-western States and Territories in Southern California in the early part of the present century."

It is not to be expected that a work of this kind by an untutored artist should be equal to that of a cultured painter or sculptor, so we are not surprised that it should be described as "a specimen of crude Christian art, employed by the Roman missionaries to convey divine truths to the mind through the eye instead of through the ear—a kindergarten method."

The writer of this article appears to be the Secretary of the Presbyterian Home Mission Board, though this is not positively stated to be the case. At all events the statement comes from this quarter, inasmuch as it is said that this representation of the crucifixion came from the distant Southwest to the Secretary's desk during the past year, having been presented by the missionary, who got it from its Mexican owner, the woman already referred to.

The image was in use in a Mexican home, and it is merely an assumption of the writer that it was used by missionaries for the purpose of teaching Christian truths. Nevertheless there is no wrong or incongruity in its having been so used; for why should we not be instructed through the eye as well as through the ear? The sense of sight is given to us by our Creator as well as that of hearing, that through it we may learn the things the knowledge of which we need. In fact much of our knowledge is acquired through books, for the reading of which the use of sight is required, and the only book from which those who cannot read can learn is from pictures or images. But we know from experience that even for those who read, the picture or image of an event makes a deeper impression than either speech or a written description, and though Protestants have condemned the use of images, nature itself teaches that their use for a good purpose is lawful and laudable. So evident is this that we cannot account for the statement of the Mission Secretary that the image in question was used as an idol, otherwise than by our conviction that he is wilfully dishonest in making such a statement.

Is it because, as a work of art, the image in question was crude, that its use must be regarded as unlawful or idolatrous? Common sense forbids that this should be asserted. It is not because the half-breed artist who, according to the Home Mission Secretary, made the tablet, did his best to make the image as well as he could, suited as well the taste of those for whom he made it, as the most finished artist would suit a more educated people, and his work would have the effect of making a deep impression on those for whom it was intended, and would make them feel the love of our crucified Saviour more intensely than could be effected by any word painting. This is admitted by the Home Secretary, who says that in the beginning, within this century, when the image was made, it was not an idol, but was used to make the sufferings of Christ known and appreciated. Now every one knows that Catholic faith has not changed during this period (nor indeed at any period), and neither has the Catholic practice changed, which is founded upon that faith. If the missionary's convert tried to make him believe that the image was used by Catholics as an idol, as he pretends she did, she was only playing on the credulity of the simple man, perhaps for the purpose of gaining some consideration from him by exhibiting herself to ignorant wondering audiences as a brand snatched from the burning of Catholic idolatry and superstition. But the missionary himself ought to have known better, or he was totally unfit for his work.

The object of the missionary and the Home Mission Secretary in telling this cock-and-bull story is evidently to make the public believe that the Presbyterian missionaries are making wonderful progress in the conversion of the Mexicans to their peculiar creed; but if the story be true in its tangible features, the only inference we can draw is that they are turning a moral people into liars of the Margaret Shepard or Widdows alias Nobbs class.

To show that the representation of the missionary and the Home Secretary are over-sanguine we may here add that in an article recently written by the Mexican Vice-President, Senor Mariscal, for the New York Independent, that gentleman states that the Mexican Government is anti Catholic, and has made all Church property the property of the State, and has forbidden religious instruction in the schools, nevertheless, he adds, that the people are still, practically, as Catholic as they ever were. The fact is that though the Freemasons have obtained control of the Government, the rulers are not Protestants, but are rather anti-Christian. The great bulk of the people, who are still firmly Catholic at heart, are precluded from a share in the politics of the country, but it is to be hoped that they will before long make themselves heard and their wishes respected.

SPECIFICATIONS WANTED.

From the Interior.

We hear of a Congressional minister who says that God made nothing perfect—left man to finish the job. We would like to see that minister try his hand on a water lily, a spray of arbutus, a scarlet tanager, or the song of wood thrush. We would like to know what improvement he has to suggest on a native forest, a virgin lake, a rainbow, or a snow crystal. Let us see his specifications for bettering moonlight, or the starry skies, or a blue-eyed girl baby.

THE MORMON QUESTION.

The agitation in the United States against the taking of his seat in Congress by Congressman Brigham H. Roberts has assumed such proportions that there is every likelihood that Congress will take the matter into serious consideration immediately upon its assembling, and that the decision will be against the member elect for Utah, who glories in the fact that in spite of the clause against polygamy, which was put into the constitution of that state before it was admitted to statehood, he still retains the three wives whom he held previously to the adoption of that constitution.

There is no doubt that the Congress has power by a majority vote to declare a seat vacant. To do this would ordinarily be an arbitrary act; but in the present instance there are strong reasons why Mr. Roberts should not be permitted to take his seat. It is, very properly, a law of the United States that polygamy shall not be tolerated. The Mormons maintain that the Federal Government has no right under the Constitution to pass such a law, which regards only morals and religious belief. To this it is answered that the inviolability of the married state regards public morals and the well-being of society, of which it is the basis, and it is therefore within the competence of the supreme authority of the Union and the State to pass laws to secure it.

The constitutional enactment of Utah prohibiting polygamy is identical with the Congressional law on the same subject, the crime being described in the same terms as well as the penalties to be inflicted for its violation. That prohibition is made unenforceable without the consent of the United States, and the Mormons have asserted that it is obeyed in Utah. It is now admitted that in the case of those who were already married to several wives, the law is not obeyed, and this is the position of Mr. Roberts. He is, therefore, a violator of the law, and the penalty of the violation is that he is rendered ineligible to any office under the Federal Government.

It was a breach of the covenant which Utah made with the United States as a condition of its being admitted to Statehood, to send a confessed polygamist to represent it in Congress, and to admit such a man to a seat in that body would be tantamount to a declaration that a man who, under the law, would be eligible to fill a cell in the penitentiary, is a suitable law-maker for the people of the United States.

The Federal law forbidding polygamy was passed in 1852. Before Utah was admitted as a State, an amnesty was proclaimed for those who had hitherto disobeyed the law, but this was granted under the condition that they should obey the law thereafter. Mr. Roberts did not obey, and he is still living in open violation of both the Federal and state laws on the subject. It seems undeniable under these circumstances that it is the duty of Congress to vindicate the law, and to refuse permission to Mr. Roberts to take his seat.

There is little doubt that the question of Mr. Roberts' eligibility will be brought up in Congress immediately on its assembling, and if the rumors now current be correct, the Mormon authorities are convinced that they cannot maintain the cause of polygamy, and for this reason they will try to persuade Mr. Roberts to resign his seat on the opening of the Congressional Session, so that a non-polygamist representative of Mormonism may be elected in his place. Mr. Roberts, however, has declared that he will not resign, but that he will vindicate his position in the House. In an interview with a representative of the New York World he said:

"Say this for me: There is not a State in the Union where polygamous marriages are so entirely under the ban of the law as in Utah: Plural marriages are prohibited by the edict of the Mormon Church, and have been so since President Woodruff's manifesto in 1890."

In further reference to his own case he adds:

"All the polygamy that exists in Utah today is simply that some men who entered plural marriage relationships years ago, under sanction of the teachings of the Mormon Church, considered themselves under moral obligations to fulfill the conditions of the marriage covenant, and refused to cast off the women who trusted them. It will be interesting to know just what moral or religious benefits will result to the community by turning adrift these plural wives or disowning their offspring."

It is almost needless to say that there is no need of disowning their offspring if the Mormons become obedient to the law; and some provision may well be made also for the discarded wives under the same conditions, which will remove the difficulty here presented; but we much mistake the temper of the people of the United States if they per-

mit the scandal of plural marriages to be still flaunted before their faces.

As regards the law-abiding character of the Mormons, which is so strongly insisted on by Mr. Roberts, there is a mass of testimony contradicting it, obliging us to believe that it is purely imaginary. Eugene Young, a grandson of Brigham Young, the former President of the Mormon Church, and Governor of Utah territory, in a speech recently delivered in New York said:

"If the Mormon people have abandoned polygamy, why should President Snow say in an interview in September, 'I believe in the revelation given to Joseph Smith on celestial marriage, and that under certain circumstances Latter Day Saints would be doing no moral or religious wrong in practicing plural marriage under divine sanction and religious regulations?' Why should Salt Lake state in the Church, say only last year: 'We still believe in the principle of plural marriages, as we believe in the practice of the patriarchs. You can't change a people's beliefs?' Why should Apostle Woodruff, youngest member of the highest Church quorum, say in June: 'The belief in polygamy is as much a part of the Mormon faith to-day as it ever was?'"

In fact it is stated by missionaries who have lived in Utah that it is part of the Mormon teaching that women are to be saved only through their husbands, and the husbands may leave them in their graves so that they shall not have a part in the resurrection to eternal life if their husbands are displeased with them, and thus they can never see their children. This doctrine results in a degrading slavery for women, who are thus placed in as low a condition as that to which the worst forms of heathenism have reduced them, and the overthrow of Mormonism will be woman's emancipation from a most gross degradation.

The chief fear that the Congress will not take a decisive stand against Mormonism arises from the possibility that the parties in Congress may be respectively influenced by the desire to secure the Mormon vote, and may thus be led to take no decisive stand on the question of Mormonism, and that thus Mr. Roberts may be allowed to degrade Congress by his presence as a member of that body. In Wyoming, Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, Montana, and Idaho, the Mormons are already strong, and in the last named State, according to Eugene Young, they have been able to return eleven members to the Legislature, while in Arizona they hold the balance of power. It remains to be seen whether these facts will sufficiently terrorize Congress to prevent it from taking a decisive stand against allowing an avowed representative of Mormonism in its most hideous form to sit in the halls of Congress.

"INCOMPATIBILITY."

Those who defend divorces obtained on account of "incompatibility of temper" dwell dolorously on the anguish endured by the book-loving husband or wife mismatched with a partner lacking the refinements of polite literature. To be perfectly frank, this plaint is usually made on behalf of the better sex, over whom for once society is justly sentimental, and who in this conspicuous instance are the beneficiaries of social prejudice. Discussing this very point, Miss Ella W. Peattie writes in a secular magazine: "It is well to remember that there may be many points of congeniality between persons who are far apart in their bookish knowledge and in the fineness of their taste. Marriage is a sacrament, not a lyceum for the debating of abstract questions."

The women who write great books, who paint fine pictures or are brilliant actresses or skilled physicians; who are mayors or safe consulting-lawyers are not so dear to men as those who, in sheltered homes, listen for the home coming of little feet."—Ave Maria.

PROTESTANTS AND OUR LADY.

A learned Jesuit of London, Rev. T. Donnelly, S. J., recently spoke of "The Glory of Mary." Her glory was great, he said, because she had been chosen by God to be His mother, and her glory was great because she was the purest of all creatures—pure in mind, in body and in soul. They had seen her in her relationship with God; he had seen her as she would, herself, and that evening her relationship towards creation, her royalty and her co-creation, and the power she possessed.

It was clear from the liturgy of the Church that her royalty was indisputable in the minds of her children, and throughout the Catholic world. Mary was hailed every day as Queen. James I. frequently talked of his claim to reign by divine right. The Stuart strove to assert that right over the people of this realm. Whatever the justice of these claims might be, the fact was one about whom there could possibly be any dispute. As Jesus Christ reigned by divine right, so His mother. Our Lady taught Catholics and non-Catholics alike the true religion of heretics, and heretics railed against her, for they knew she was the better that would crush them. Protestants not only in this country, but in Germany, and in the northern countries of Europe, as well as in the United States of America, had next to no conception of who Jesus Christ really was