

HOLY PICTURES.

In Catholic Churches pictures of our Lord, of His Immaculate mother and of the Saints adorn the walls. Non Catholics visit our churches, look at these pictures, then go home to talk about the idolatry of Catholics. It is unjust to charge a crime against others without an examination of the evidence. All that Catholics demand, hear, before condemning us. There is not a tittle in our faith or practice, as Catholics, of which we are ashamed, We love all that there is in the church and her teaching, and would prefer death to the loss of them. Our separated brethren can only learn what the Catholic Church believes and teaches from herself, and not from her enemies. Ask any child of ten or twelve years of age: "Do you Catholics adore the pictures hanging on the walls of your churches?" The answer will be "that the Catholic Church forbids the adoration of them." What glib stories are told of Catholics kneeling down before a picture to adore the pictures in their churches, and calling on them to hear, help and grant their requests. Such sweet little stories too, for children are written, "The Italian boy and his medal" of the Blessed Virgin and others of this kind. The Catholic kneels down before a picture to say his prayers. Yes he does, in the church and at home, too. Why does he do this? Let us see first what is prayer? It is the raising up of our minds and hearts to God, to praise Him, give Him thanks for His benefits and beg for new favors. In prayer, therefore, we speak to God. When speaking to our fellow men we pay attention to what we are saying. It is more necessary to rivet our attention when we speak to God, We can do this by confining our minds, first to the words we are uttering, second, to the sense or meaning of them, third, to think of God and holy things. It is very difficult to hold the eyes fixed in vacant stare, but confine it to an object and the task becomes easy. It has something to steady it. So it is with the mind. It requires help to keep it riveted upon one thought. In mathematical problems the figures and signs which are used help to concentrate the mind upon the work. The succession of changes, the different figures and signs cause in the mind helps to relieve the strain upon it. The Catholic looks at the pictures before which he is kneeling while at prayer and it helps him to keep his mind from distraction. If it be a picture of our Lord, the scene it represent fills his mind with God's mercy towards sinners, and thus encourage him into prayer. If it be the Blessed Virgin or of other Saints, it keeps before his mind what the grace of God can effect to poor mortals like himself. Another thing these holy pictures do. They bring to our mind the lives of the holy person, represented by them, and this too, in characteristic manner. For as in every individual there is one trait of character prominent above the rest, so in the lives of holy persons, saints, one virtue and its practice is prominently peculiar to the life of each one. This marked characteristic of his or her life is shadowed forth in the picture of a saint. Thus by enumerating the paintings, pictures and statues, which adorn the interior of Catholic churches, one can count over practical examples of the virtues that distinguish the life of Christian. These teach the learned and the unlettered. What are all these things but a book of one page in which is written the whole life of the person represented? But Catholics say: Pray to the Blessed Virgin, to St. Joseph, to St. Patrick, to your patron saint and to others whom they mention. What if they do? Does it follow from this assertion that they adore the pictures of these saints of God? We answer, not by any means. We ask the saints to pray for us, to help us to grow into the favor of God. We remind them of the trials they suffered while on earth and ask their assistance. Though we love them because they are crowned in glory before the throne of God; and are His special friends, yet none would be so horrified as we at even the presumptuous thought of giving to them any of the honor which belongs to God alone. We honor them and holy pictures, images and statues with an interior and relative honor. We honor the Saints as God's friends and ours, too, the representation of them and holy things simply because the relate to God, and are memorials of Him and His Saints.

medals of our Lord, the Blessed Virgin and Saints, but they don't adore them or think these things can hear or help them. These images are carried by us as a reminder that God created us for Himself, hence these saints represented are to be our companions, if we imitate their virtue. The Church also blesses all these and asks God to preserve those who carry them from sin and an unprovided death. We believe that the prayers of the Church are efficacious, if no obstacle be presented on our part, though we do not think those things an infallible cure for every disease of the soul and body. We ground our confidence on promises of Jesus Christ to His Church, in which He left power to bind and loose, and declared that her acts would be ratified in heaven. S. S. M. in Catholic Columbian.

IRISH PROTESTANT.

The Unprovoked Brutality of their Demonstrations. The crimes of the "men of the lodges" have been wholly monotonous in utter absence of provocation by which they have been attended, and in the fanatical fury with which they have been perpetrated. The "exceptionally civilized" section of Irish society, for the sake and to justify whose unnatural prejudices five-sixths of the Irish people have for the present, been denied the right to govern themselves, have been daily endeavoring absolutely to exterminate the Catholic minority in their midst, without even the slightest ground for excuse, much less justification; and since the police have, in the execution of their duty as preservers of the peace, tried to prevent them from killing the defenceless Catholic girls working in the mills and factories, sacking and looting the public houses of Catholics, and assailing men gathered together in crowds to defend themselves, their wives, their children and their homes from destruction, "the chosen of God," as they have been called by their leaders and admirers, and as they consider themselves, have turned with no less savage ferocity on the constabulary, whom they now call "Morley's murderers." The favorite weapons are paving stones, which are locally called "kidneys," iron nuts and bolts, and revolvers, for the proclamation for the disarming of Belfast has been allowed by the present government to become a dead letter; and with those weapons they turn out, day after day, at almost every hour of the day and night, in cold blood as well as in hot blood, and in the assertion of their divine right to be lords and masters over four million and a half of people in Ireland, assail with murderous intent every man, woman and child whom they know not to be of the Orange persuasion. The account of a day's fighting in Belfast read like those of a battle between regular troops and a band of savage guerillas, and a final touch is added to the picture of the announcement in the papers that the ambulance corps of the local Queen's College has been asked to go into the field, since the hospitals are full. The riots and the outrages which accompany them are invariably caused by attempts on the part of the Orangemen to get into the Catholic quarters of the town for the purpose of murder and pillage, the Catholics acting simply on the defensive, and when the police intervene, clearing out of the way altogether. But, perhaps, more irritating and provocative of retaliation, as they are infinite ly more cowardly, are the attacks on isolated individuals—boys and girls, as well as men and women—indulged in daily by large mobs of Orange rowdies. —Belfast cor. in Boston Herald.

THE PROSPECT OF HOME RULE IN IRELAND.

Mr. Freeman, the historian, in an able article on "The Prospects of Home Rule," which appears in the September number of the Fortnightly Review, gives the following estimate of the political outlook as regards the Irish Question: "If any one think that Home Rule is thrust aside forever, he has indeed failed to read the history of the great movement of our own century or of any century. The progress made by Home Rule in this first attempt is wonderful. On that head read Sir. Charles Duffy in the August number of the Contemporary Review. Some scheme will have to be brought forward by somebody, possible another scheme on the same general lines as Mr. Gladstone, possible on the federal principle possibly on some other. The great objection to the federal plan is that a really fair federal system would involve such a breaking up of old names and associations as Englishmen would hardly endure, and which I suppose that Scotchmen and Irishmen would not endure either. I must myself prefer the Kingdom of England to the canton of Wessex. On the other hand, while the federal scheme is under discussion, we cannot put out of sight that both in Scotland and in Wales signs of a tendency to something like Home Rule have shown themselves in a way which no one had thought of at the beginning of the

year. Voices have been heard directly bearing on the subject, and the vote itself on the late election is the most instructive of all. The historical aspect is a lesson indeed. England has rejected the Irish demand for Home Rule because Englishmen cannot throw themselves into the position which makes Irishmen seek for it. It is the hardest thing of men of a race which is wont to rule to learn to understand the feelings of a race in any way subject or dependent. Scotland and Wales—lands assuredly not now subject or dependent, but which as smaller nations attached to a large at least conceive the possibility of subjection or dependence—better understand the Irish demand; they are better able to throw themselves into the position of the Irish in making it. They therefore give a more decided majority for Home Rule than England gives against it. From accepting the demand of Home Rule for Ireland, some at least in both countries have gone on to think of Home Rule for themselves. The cry has not been very loud, but that it should have been heard at all is the thing to be noticed. And Home Rule for Scotland and Wales could assuredly take no shape but a federal one. The bill of this year is dead, but it is quite possible that its main principles are not dead. It is quite certain that Home Rule in one shape or another is not dead. The real fair, indeed, is not that Home Rule is likely to be treated as dead but the Home Rule may be taken up without real zeal, without real conviction, as a means of outbidding a rival party. Of all kinds of legislation, the worst is that which is undertaken with the view of "dashing" the other side."

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