

We take from a contemporary the following paragraph:—"We understand that a well-known settler, of middle age, until recently resident in this district, is about to commence proceedings for breach of promise of marriage, the lady being what is known as of an uncertain age." Query: Will the lady's being of an uncertain age enable her to plead infancy?

American Notes.

AMONG the celebrations this year of Washington's birthday has been the hoisting of the flag of the Republic on several of the Catholic schools. The action, in question, was typical of the spirit of American patriotism fostered by the teaching given in the schools. At Boston St. Patrick's Day was chosen as especially appropriate for the flag-hoisting, as it was also the anniversary of the evacuation of the city by the British troops. The pupils of the Catholic schools, meantime, continue to do justice to the instruction given them. The Christian Brothers' boys in New York, for example, have followed up the success gained by them a few months ago, in a competitive examination for a cadetship at West Point, by winning, once more against all competitors from the public schools, three naval cadetships. They have, moreover, in this instance also beaten the public school boys on their own ground, the examinations being based on subjects taught in the public schools. The United States, therefore, bid fair to own in their Catholic population a class of citizens equal to any in patriotism and loyalty to the Republic, and surpassing the non-Catholic masses in their education. All this is due to excellent Catholic schools, among which, as will be seen, those of the Christian Brothers take a chief place.

Patriotic Americans are much concerned at a scandal which has occurred in the navy. The particular ship is named the *Enterprise*, and a court of inquiry is sitting in the case of her captain, a man named McCalla, and some two or three of his officers. McCalla is accused of cruelty towards his men, of which several disgraceful instances are narrated. He is also accredited with acting unlike an American in neglecting the national anniversaries, but religiously observing that of the English king, William of Orange. It seems he took advantage of his ship's being in English waters to be present, and compel the attendance of his men at the unveiling of a statue of the hero of Glencoe. He also made a collection from his men to aid in defraying the cost of the monument. But Orange devotion, and violent and brutal cruelty have often gone hand in hand. If the charges brought against McCalla and the officers concerned are proved, the least that can follow is dismissal from the navy.

Attention has once more been drawn to the sources of the population of the United States by a report, repudiated by the preacher concerned, of a sermon preached in New York by an Episcopalian doctor of divinity, named De Costa, and in which, while advocating a celebration in 1897 of Cabot's voyage to the country he was represented as claiming that thence proceeded the "Anglo-Saxon civilisation of America." The claim was at once denied, it being pointed out that many elements entered into American civilisation, of which the Anglo-Saxon formed a minor part. Doctor de Costa, however, explained that he had been misunderstood, and that, in fact, he had himself been for many years an opponent of the Anglo-Saxon tradition. When, nevertheless, a forum of expression becomes generally current it is difficult to arrest its course—and then the difficulty of the reporters in finding an exact epithet should also obtain some consideration. "English-speaking," as suggested by Dr. de Costa, seems but little preferable—"Omnium gatherum," we may add, would hardly do at all.

Dr. Shanley, the newly consecrated Bishop of North Dakota, brings a severe charge against the Government of the States, in connection with a remnant of the Chippewa Indians who are perishing of want in the extreme north of his diocese—1930 Indians, confined to a district of bad timber forests, lakes, swamps and rocks, where not 100 white men could raise enough to keep them alive. The Bishop, who had recently returned from spending a week among the wretched sufferers, has undertaken a tour through the States on their behalf. He gives the most lamentable description of their plight, which, he said, used as he had been to the misery of great cities, he could not see without shedding tears. Eleven million acres, he said openly in the cathedral at Philadelphia, had been stolen from these people—not one cent being paid to them in return. Negotiations, meantime, for the cession of the greater portion of their lands are on the eve of being concluded with the Chippewa Indians of Minnesota—a matter which is expected to result to the great benefit of the State. In view of the condition of things in Dakota, a passage in the President's message to Congress on the subject seems particularly appropriate. The Indians, he says, show an "indisposition to treat with the Government for further concessions, while its obligations incurred under former agreements are unkept." This, indeed, is little to be wondered at. But whatever may be its origins, the civilisation of the country is disgraced by the state of affairs described by Bishop Shanley.

The report for last year of the New York State Board of Mediation and Arbitration shows a diminution of strikes and lock-outs. The report also states that the principle of arbitration is coming into general favour, and that the strike and lock-out are being looked upon as resorts only in extreme circumstances. A great deal of interest, meantime, is attached to a Bill introduced into Congress by Mr. Anderson of Kansas for the creation of a United States Commission of Arbitration, whose office it should be to investigate disputes between railway, steamboat, or telegraph companies and their

employees, with a power of appeal to the United States courts, whose decision must be accepted, under penalties, as final. The increasing acceptance by employers of the services of the New York Board, and the fortunate results obtained, by which, among the rest, the proper relations between capital and labour are made apparent, may be taken as significant of the success of the more general institution proposed by Mr. Anderson.

Particulars published in the *American Ecclesiastical Review* show that the work of Catholic missions among the coloured population is being carried on with great success. Some of its principal lay helpers are Protestants who give it the support both of their influence and their purses. The Protestant negroes also show a high appreciation of it, as is proved, for example, by the attendance at the mission school at Covington, Ky. where although the coloured Catholics number only 93, the number of school children amounts to 200. The missionaries especially devoted to the negro population are the Josephite Fathers from Mill Hill, London, of whose order the writer, Father Slattery, is an American member.

Recklessness has just had an illustration in the bursting of a dam on the Hassayampa River in Arizona, by which 100 lives have been lost. Recklessness only could have permitted the occurrence of such an accident after the terrible warning given by the catastrophe at Johnstown, Pa. It would seem, however, that no warning can suffice. Probably no preventive measures can be taken unless in the severe punishment of those who are made accountable—either the owners of a defective reservoir or its builders, or, better still, both together.

That eccentric lady, Miss Cusack, has published a book, in which she denounces the class of females known as "escaped nuns." She calls them "born frauds"—though let us hope their iniquity is of less early growth. "I have found," she says, "a case of this kind lately. A woman, who had been an inmate of a Roman Catholic refuge for fallen women in England, actually represented herself as the daughter of a distinguished Roman Catholic family, described her magnificent dresses, her jewels, her high life, and last, not least, declared she had escaped from a convent in England. Her whole story, from end to end, was a lie. She was simply a very clever adventuress. When I read this woman's statements, having so many experiences with Sisters and nuns, I saw at once that she had never been a Sister or an inmate of a convent, except as a fallen woman. But it was in vain that I pointed out this to those whom she had deceived, and I got very little thanks for speaking. I had opportunity afterwards of ascertaining everything which I suspected was exactly what had happened. The woman averted suspicion by her cautious way of writing of the Sisters. All she wanted was the advantage of appearing before the public, at a time of great excitement, as a person of a distinguished family, who had made immense sacrifices for religion. Her persistent refusal to tell where she came from, should at once have awakened the suspicion of those whom she so cleverly deceived." But these people do not want their suspicion to be awakened, and Miss Cusack will get no more thanks from them for what she now writes than she did for what she then said. If Miss Cusack, in fact, desires to succeed in her new course of life she must herself become an "escaped nun" and go in for the brimstone and fury of the calling. An ex-nun who only goes half-way must prove a dead failure, and find herself, as the old saying has it, "neither fish, flesh, nor good red-herring."

Instructions said to have been given by Mr. Blaine to the representatives of the United States in the Pan-American Congress to offer absolute reciprocity to the South and Central American Republics are under public discussion. Those who favour the proposal speak of the market to be thus opened to American produce and manufactures, and the advantages of obtaining raw material and other things, as well as of the development of ship-building. Opponents of the scheme dwell principally on the competition involved in it with the industries of the sugar-planters and wool-growers. The traditional freetraders are accused of being indifferent, as no advantage to British interests is held out for their support.

A fierce tornado has occasioned devastation in the South-west reaching its climax at Louisville, Ky. The storm took the form of a balloon-shaped cloud, lit up with incessant lightning and roaring furiously. It passed by with inconceivable rapidity, and whatever it struck went down without warning. Fortunately it did not extend very widely and only what was directly in its path was injured, but no building could withstand it and there was no time for anyone to escape. The loss of life, particularly in the city named, was numerous, and there was great destruction of property. In other towns and other States besides mischief was done, but nowhere so disastrously. Among the buildings destroyed in Louisville were a Catholic church and presbytery and a Sisters' Home and school, one of the nuns being killed.

Returns of 1800 steam laundries show that several thousand Chinamen are employed there, who weekly send out of the country a sum of 40,000 dols., and exclude from employment 15,000 American citizens. It is enquired what would have been the state of things, had not the Chinese Exclusion Bill been passed by Congress. At least no patriotic housewife, under the circumstances, could think of giving out her washing.

A league has been formed in Canada called the Canadian Independence League, and having for its object the emancipation of the country from English rule. Constitutional means only are to be employed to gain the desired end, whose fulfilment is predicted to take place in the year 1892. Clubs to promote the object of the League are being formed all over the country.