

THE recent Belmont-Vanderbilt wedding, in which both parties had been previously divorced, is fittingly supplemented by the words of Justice Beekman, of New York, at the close of his court during a late week in January:

I was simply appalled when I looked at the divorce calendar with sixty cases before me last week in which the defendants had defaulted. I question the witnesses as closely as I can, but it is hard to get evidence of collusion. Some of these people have no regard for the marriage relation and look on marriage as something temporary, which they can set aside when they are tired of it.

If Americans in high life lead in this respect, and if the law makes the leading outwardly respectable by its sanction, it cannot be wondered that the people follow, even to sixty unprotested suits in one city per week.

The justice adds further:

I become more and more of the opinion that there should be in this country an officer corresponding to the Queen's Proctor in England. This official handles all papers in default divorce cases, and after investigating them, reports on them. The position of such an official here would stand to divorce actions as the Attorney-General does in cases against corporations for a dissolution. All papers in such actions against corporations must be filed with him, and if it is necessary in those cases, how much more so it is necessary in divorce actions, in which all society is interested.

THE Rev. Dr. Rainsford, of St. George's, New York, has been endeavoring for a number of years to secure an endowment fund for the church, which is situated down town, and year by year is being attended more largely by people who have not the means to contribute much to its support. Dr. Rainsford's belief is that the narrower and poorer the lives of the people who attend a church, the more attractive the church ought to be made, by way of contrast to their daily lives.

One of his vestrymen promised to double whatever sums were contributed for this purpose in five years. He has faithfully kept his pledge. Every special collection and contribution for this purpose has been duplicated. The five years expired at the close of January, 1896, and the vestryman, whose name, despite his wish for secrecy, has become known—Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan has paid in something over \$50,000 in the five years.

The amount raised up to date is \$150,000. Dr. Rainsford has asked for \$200,000.

There are churches in Toronto which should be endowed, notably St. James' (Anglican), which may already derive sufficient income from its lands, and St. Andrew's (Presbyterian).

A MISSION to non-Catholics has just been established in New York, with the avowed purpose of preaching Roman Catholic doctrines to Protestants and any others who are not members of the Church.

A similar mission has proved successful in the Western States; it is now begun in the East. It is conducted by the Paulist Fathers, and is attracting large audiences.

"Inquirers' classes" are formed, questions concerning the doctrines of the Roman Church are invited and answered, and discourses are preached bearing upon the teachings of the Church.

It is distinctly asserted that Protestantism is not attacked, that all religious sensibilities are respected, and that the mission is purely one for instruction in, and a better understanding of, the doctrines of the Church.

The purpose is, of course, to make converts, and it is the frankly-spoken experience of the Paulist Fathers that a large majority of those who join the "inquirers' class" become Roman Catholics.

IN CANADA.

THE imputation on the part of an adverse press that the recent shuffle in the Dominion Cabinet is attributable to the interference of the British Colonial Secretary, may be amusing; but it is nevertheless a tribute to Mr. Chamberlain's ability, and proof of the rapid recognition of the same by press and public.

In the years when Sir John Macdonald was Premier of Canada, so great became the national belief in his statesmanship and diplomacy, that his followers regarded him as omniscient and omnipotent; while the political world at large found no scheme too deep or wide-reaching, no detail too insignificant, to attribute to his devising.

"I owe some of my brightest ideas and a good deal of my reputation to my opponents," he said once, on hearing of a bit of wisdom thus imputed; "and," with a whimsical smile, "I never repudiate a good thing."

The British Secretary for the Colonies has instituted such vigorous imperio-colonial policy, and placed himself so directly in touch with British dependencies, that politicians are disposed to discern his voice and authority even in the petty plottings of a disintegrated Colonial Government.

It is marvelous what a strong man in a high office can accomplish; how things hitherto intangible become suddenly possibilities, even probabilities; how dry bones become vital realities. There is only one thing more marvelous, and that is the little a weak man can accomplish under similar circumstances.

Truly, the man makes the place. And Mr. Chamberlain bids fair to make his office the chiefest in the chief Government of the nations.

THE International Deep Waterways Commission, which met in Detroit midway in January, was placed in a somewhat difficult position by the recent irritation between the two countries.

To discuss the ways and means of establishing a common waterway while the nations interested were yet breathing war threatenings, was obviously impossible. To secure an interest in the project from either side at a juncture when frontier and lake defences were being freely discussed, was equally out of the question.

The project is a great one; but a fracas such as that over Venezuela claims, unfortunately engenders a mutual bitterness and distrust which it takes time to allay.

Before the idea can meet with further encouragement, there must be some guarantee of a permanent peace between the countries; the interpretation of the Monroe doctrine must be agreed upon, and an International Board of Arbitration established.

These things are future sureties, since the will of the people is for them; and following them will be the establishment of a common waterway between the two nations.

Our lake captains are in no present condition to be trusted on such a waterway even if it were established. Their loyalty is—tremendous. The Lake Captains' Association of Ontario passed a resolution placing its services at the disposal of the Imperial Government in event of war; whereupon the American lake captains grew red-hot with loyalty to the Stars and Stripes, and passed a resolution placing all their vessels at the disposal of Uncle Sam's Government—some of their owners offering to fit them up as fighting machines. Talk about a common waterway; why, in event of war they would fight as fiercely as the Kilkenny cats, and with similar results; unless they exploded with the vehemence of their loyalty before the crisis arrived.

THEY are splendid fellows—these sailors—whether on inland or outland sea; they suffer and bear much without complaint. They are brave without self-laudations.

The nine survivors of the steamer Ealing, who arrived at Canso, Nova Scotia, the other day, frost-bitten and half dead with exposure, after three days and four nights drifting in open boat on a winter sea, is an instance of the suffering.

The staunchness of the C.P.R. steamship Miowera in standing by the disabled Strathnevis, taking her in tow, and, when the line broke in the wildness of the storm, spending fifteen hours searching for her, is an instance of generous heroism. And such things are occurring every day and night out on the great waters.

REGARDING the present condition of affairs at Ottawa there is but one opinion, even among Conservatives,—that the sooner the present Government goes into Opposition the better for its party and the country.

Five years on the Opposition benches will sift the wheat from the chaff; will bring the strong, pure men to the fore, and enable the Conservatives to return to the Government side an honorable and united party, capable of producing a Ministry worthy of the name.

Sir Charles Tupper may be able to accomplish this without the downfall of the Conservative Government, since Conservative principles and platform are undoubtedly those that appeal most strongly to the people at the present juncture. But the present Ministry has done its best to make his task a difficult one, and in event of his success one thing is certain, that the Ministry itself must be reconstructed; since, not only have its members lost mutual respect and confidence, but the people have lost it in them.

WHEN will men and women learn to ignore anonymous letters; and why should Cabinet Ministers, of all others, belittle themselves by taking the slightest notice of such communications? How much better it would have been in the recent instance if these letters had been consigned to the waste basket or the grate, and simply forgotten.

Private individuals are not always strong enough to do this, but public men should be.

It seems incredible that letters of the kind should have caused such disturbance; but the fact that they did so reveals in sorry manner the mutual distrust of the Cabinet.

THERE is one cleanliness among the many political smudges of the present session, and that is the honorable conduct and courage of Sir Mackenzie Bowell.

The worst that his opponents are able to allege of him is, that he is obstinate, and has not the qualities of a leader,—grave evils in a Premier doubtless, yet they are not of intention.

Honoring his word, ready to fulfil his pledge, even at great cost, facing his foes bravely, even when he finds them of his own household,—the ruddy, white-haired leader wins our sympathy and compels our admiration.

Sir Mackenzie Bowell has never stood higher in the esteem of his countrymen of both parties than he does to-day.

THERE is no doubt that the Opposition leaders did not rise to the splendid opportunity that was afforded them by the Cabinet conflict. The occasion called for something stronger than sarcasm. It was theirs to give severe arraignment, to strike a high, pure dispassionate note of condemnation that would have found echoing thrill throughout the country.

EDITOR.