

"125. In the collateral line, marriage is prohibited between brother and sister, legitimate or natural; but it is permitted between a man and the sister of his deceased wife, or the widow of his brother."

The following articles need only be quoted:—

"127. Marriage is also prohibited between uncle and niece, aunt and nephew.

"127. The other impediments recognised according to the different religious persuasions, as resulting from relationship or affinity, or from other causes, remain subject to the rules hitherto followed in the different Churches and religious communities. The right, likewise, of granting dispensations from such impediments appertains, as heretofore, to those who have hitherto enjoyed it."

Such was the opinion of His Lordship the Bishop of Three Rivers, himself, and of all the Catholic Bishops of the Province of Quebec, a fact which the following letters already published will show beyond doubt:—

(Translation.)

MONTREAL, 28th February, 1880.

MY LORD,—The discussion on the Bill to render legal marriages between brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law began last night, as your Lordship will have seen from to-day's newspapers. The point meeting with most opposition is the recognition by the State of the right to give dispensations in the case of the impediment resulting from affinity.

Would your Lordship be content to see Article 125 of the Code repealed in order to legalize such a marriage without further ado? Do you think that in that case the right of giving dispensations would be sufficiently protected by Article 127?

An answer addressed to me at Ottawa will oblige

Your obedient servant,

D. GIROUARD.

(Translation.)

BISHOPRIC OF THREE RIVERS,

5th March, 1880.

D. GIROUARD, Esq., M.P.

MY DEAR SIR,—I regret that your Bill for the legal recognition of marriages between brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law cannot pass as it was brought forward. Nevertheless, the repeal of that prohibition in Article 125 of the C. C. being favourable to the liberty of the Church, I have no objection to its simple repeal, leaving the dispensation of that impediment, as well of the other impediments, to the authorities designated in Article 127.

I remain, etc.,

†L. F., Bishop of Three Rivers.

(Translation.)

MONTREAL TELEGRAPH CO., March 2, 1880.

By telegraph from Rimouski to D. GIROUARD.

Letter received this morning. What you propose will suffice and satisfies me.

†BISHOP OF RIMOUSKI.

(Translation.)

SHERBROOKE, 1st March, 1880.

D. GIROUARD, Esq., M.P., Ottawa.

SIR,—I think it is sufficient to repeal Article 125 of the Code in order to legalize the marriage now before Parliament. I am also of opinion that the right to grant dispensations is sufficiently safe-guarded by Article 127.

But would it not also be *apropos* to repeal at the same time Article 126, which prohibits marriage between uncle and niece, aunt and nephew?

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

†ANTOINE, Bishop of Sherbrooke.

(Translation.)

MONTREAL, 29th February, 1880.

MY DEAR SIR,—I certainly think that Article 127 sufficiently establishes the right to grant dispensations, and that your plan to legalize the marriages in question by amending Article 125, will be for the best.

I wish you every success.

Yours faithfully,

†EDOUARD CHS., Bishop of Montreal.

(Translation.)

ST. HYACINTHE, February 23, 1880.

D. GIROUARD, Esq., M.P., Ottawa.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform you, in answer to your yesterday's letter, that I would be content to see disappear from our Code, not only Article 125, but also Article 126, which, in many cases, are very embarrassing for us Catholics. Bishops and priests oppose with all their might, as is imposed upon them by the Church, marriages contracted by such close relations, but there are circumstances when, for the welfare of the parties interested, and the honour of families as well as the safeguard of public morals, they are obliged to solemnise such marriages, after having obtained from the Pope all the dispensations required in a similar case. A real service would thus be done us, were those two Articles, which, in my opinion, should never have been introduced into it, eliminated therefrom.

Article 127 might be retained, but worded as follows:—"The impediments to the marriage being admitted according to, etc." The rules of the Catholic Church concerning our impediments to marriages and our right to grant dispensation thereof, are therein sufficiently recognised and safeguarded. I do not, therefore, see any reason for not maintaining that Article after making in it the slight change suggested by me. Wishing you success,

I remain most sincerely,

Your obedient servant,

†L. Z. Bp. of St. Hyacinthe.