

The Catholic Register.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

THE CATHOLIC REGISTER PUBLISHING COMPANY

SUBSCRIPTION:

City, including delivery . . . \$1.50
 To all outside points . . . \$1.00
 Strictly in advance, otherwise an additional
 50c. will be charged.

OFFICE, 9 JORDAN ST., TORONTO.

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Telephone 489.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1901.

THE CHURCH AND MATRIMONY.

The now well-known Delpit case has aroused attention not only to itself but to the general question of matrimony, and the rights of Church and State involved therein. Protestant societies are all of a sudden deeply interested in the indissolubility of the marriage tie. Meetings are held, resolutions passed, and collections threatened. It has been a matter of perfect indifference to these zealots, and all the other critics, that marriage cases have been decided year after year by judges in the United States, until the number of divorces is up in the tens of thousands, and countless homes are broken up at the base breath of passion. How is it that these "unco gild" folk have not any sympathy for their suffering divorce-loving brethren across the line? It is because they are slaves of the State and human respect—and when the State does a thing, be it right or wrong, free or tyrannical, they condone it. When the Catholic Church decides a case of which it is the authorized and competent judge, then arises the cry—interference with the rights of civil society and with the freedom of the subject. This is particularly true of matrimony. "It is remarkable," says Brownson, "that most reformers find fault with the Christian law of marriage, and propose to alter the relations which God has established both in nature and in the Gospel between the sexes." After the ministerial critics come the seculars. And this week we have Goldwin Smith claiming that "marriage is a civil status, and that the time has come for the marriage and divorce law of Canada to be placed upon a rational footing, and administered by regular courts." The Professor admits that the union has a spiritual aspect, still—"For the civil power, not for the Churches or the clergy, is it to determine by whom and how matrimony may be lawfully contracted; in what cases, when contracted, it may be lawfully dissolved." Such teaching is the lever which will destroy the Christian family and undermine Christian society. Our Divine Lord raised the matrimonial contract to a Sacrament—assigned to its reception, and the state upon which those contracting it entered, graces suited for their very special relation and obligations—both in regard to each other and in regard to their children. It is God who joins man and wife together—and what He joins no man must put asunder. To the Church as the administratrix of things divine belongs the right of determining the valid or invalid conditions of matrimony. She received this right as witness of the truth and official guardian of Christian society. The State is not competent. To assume its competency is to declare marriage a civil contract. To destroy this is to destroy the sacredness and inviolability of marriage, upon which depend the sacredness and inviolability of the family. Man cannot bind man. Every contract must receive its force from God. It is from the law of God that the moral obligation of contracts springs, and therefore it is for the spiritual authority to determine what contracts are or are not lawful, their extent and termination, when they oblige and when they do not. Man could not bind his fellow with a silk thread any more than with an iron chain. Withdraw marriage from the spiritual order, no moral obligation remains to it; its violation is relieved

of all guilt and assumes a more odious, disgusting and corrupting form of sin. The spouses are not bound in conscience to mutual fidelity, and may be as unfaithful as they choose, provided they run the risk of civil penalties. It is very easy to take the next step, and doubt the right of the State to make the infidelity of either spouse a civil offence. It is still easier to take the step denying the right to bind one man to one woman, or one woman to one man, till separated by death. Hand over matrimony from the spiritual order to the civil order, and divorce with liberty to marry again becomes common; the validity of all marriage laws is denied; and free-love asserted at least in principle. Nor does the evil stop here. A train of sins and crimes follow which cannot be discussed, but of which medical men are the best witnesses. Let them be interrogated, and the danger of entrusting matrimony to the civil order will be seen in the full force of its disorganizing corruption. To leave matrimony to the civil order in these days of popular government, is to leave it to the people themselves.

Goldwin Smith bases his argument upon the ground that marriage is a civil status. That savors too much of absolutism, a doctrine which was never a favorite one of the Oxford Professor. We do not admit that it is correct. Marriages may exist without any civil status. Slaves may marry, yet they cannot be said to have a civil status. In the early ages of Christianity, or under other circumstances of place, where civil society has not been formed, marriages must have the same place as in the midst of highly civilized nations. It is primarily for the family, and only secondarily for the State that marriage was instituted. To invert this order is to threaten society with the dangers of instability and corruption. It is to abandon the family to the destructive whims of passion. Nor will the religious ceremony which Professor Smith proposes be of any avail. What does this ceremony mean? A couple are married by a civil officer, and then they go and ask their Church for its benediction. That would simply make confusion worse confounded. Suppose the Church withheld its blessing what difference would it make? The couple are lawfully married. Would the State put it as an essential condition that a certificate of the parties having received this blessing should be produced? One might as well try to stop the rushing tide with an ear. Civil society might; first place such a condition. But what one generation in the civil order does the next could validly undo. Then take our own Church—clearly, amidst all changes, proclaiming matrimony as a Sacrament. Such a course as we are discussing is out of the question. The Church says to the world: "If my children want this or any other sacrament they must receive it from me. Whatever ceremony the State insists upon, either before or after any liturgy, neither adds to nor subtracts from the validity of the sacred contract." To the Church alone belongs the power of determining the conditions that regulate the validity and the legitimacy of matrimony. It was one of the sacred trusts placed upon her by her Divine Founder. And through all the centuries she has faithfully carried out the trust, to the formation and support of Christian society and the sanctification of the Christian family. It will be an evil day when the civil order assumes to itself this responsible function. But even so, no matter how it may be with others, in the grand old Church matrimony is always a Sacrament, and the Church itself the minister thereof.

THE DIVORCE EVIL.

In last week's Weekly Sun we were somewhat surprised at a man of Goldwin Smith's calibre advocating a Divorce Court for Canada. He claims that England found the necessity for one; that the method now in vogue here in Canada—that of having recourse to the Senate—is old and out of date. In other words, Goldwin Smith, a man whose ability has made him universally respected, has fallen into making such a statement that it is too difficult to obtain a divorce here in Canada. In the face of the recent exposure of the method of securing divorces in Buffalo; in the face of the scandalous and scandalous occasioned by the Divorce Courts in Chicago and Dakota; in the face of the terrible state of affairs, recently unearthed in

Milwaukee, where, out of two hundred divorces granted, but one hundred were legal; in the face of protests from the Chicago divorce judges who are crying aloud for some measure that will diminish the divorce evil in some way or any way—in the face of this terrible and notorious state of affairs in the United States, we here in Canada, instead of advocating a laxer system of granting divorces, should rather tend in the other direction. While the Church has always absolutely refused to recognize divorces and always will maintain that marriage is a Sacrament, and as such, above and beyond the civil law; while this is so, yet we, as a Catholic paper, feel that divorces is a terrible evil, and shall never lose an opportunity to score it—to fight it while it exists in any form. We cannot recognize absolute divorces, but we are citizens of this country where such divorces are granted and, as such, we shall ever use our endeavours to lessen the evil. The Church's stand on the matter is the only one that can be productive of good and control the evil.

Let such men as Goldwin Smith read the following report of the evils of divorces as gathered by a New York Sun correspondent in Indiana:

"The report of the Indiana Department of Statistics shows that there was one divorce for about every six marriages in the state for the year ending Oct. 31 last. In other words, there were 27,071 marriages and 4,596 divorces of divorce. The court officials estimate that not less than 2,000 other suits for divorce were brought which were either withdrawn or in which the decree was dissolved by the court. Several months ago judges of probate in counties with large populations, finding their courts clogged with divorce business, made investigation, and as a result of correspondence among themselves informally started a movement for legislation this winter which would close the open places in the divorce law.

"It is estimated that one-third of the divorces in Indiana are entered on default of the defendant in the suit. The judges say that there is often collusion between man and wife, but that it is next to impossible for the court to do anything. The amendment proposed by the judges is to authorize the prosecuting attorney to appear for the defendant in the case of default and contest the proceedings, by which process it is thought that the fact of collusion will be brought to the surface. When the legislature last met, two years ago, the amendment was brought forward, but several protesting attorneys from the larger cities were conspicuous in the lobby, and the members from rural districts thought the only demand for amendment was from the prosecuting attorneys, who were to receive a fee of \$15 for each appearance in a divorce case. The result was the defeat of the desired legislation."

Thank God no such state of affairs exist in Canada. We want no Divorce Courts in this land. What we do want is an absolute abolition of power to grant divorces by any civil tribunal.

THE KING'S OATH.

The Rev. J. F. Gorman preached a sermon in Grace Church, Ottawa, a week ago on the Coronation Declaration against Catholics. The rev. preacher expressed himself as very strongly in favor of the retention of the oath. The sermon that was to bring out the rev. gentleman's bigoted and narrow-minded views was begun with a suavity and smoothness that promised better things. It referred to the amicable feeling that exists between Protestants and Catholics in Canada; it even went so far as to say that there are actually Catholics living in this country to-day towards whom their Protestant neighbors have the kindest of feelings, and even the highest respect. We should hope so. We beg to inform the Rev. J. F. Gorman that Catholics are not ostracised here; we beg to draw Mr. Gorman's attention to the fact that Catholics in this country are not beholden to Mr. Gorman or any of his ilk for the respect that noble actions, and upright, honest lives demand as their right. We did not come to this country to-day nor yesterday, nor do we propose leaving to-morrow. When Mr. Gorman and men of his kidney have passed away, Catholics will still hold places of honor here in Canada, and will be regarded with the "kindest of feelings." One would imagine, to hear the words of Mr. Gorman, that our religion is a bar to esteem and kindly feelings; one would be led to think that to be a Catholic is equivalent to being a subject for watching. Catholics in this country are doing nicely, thank God, but they owe nothing of their success to men of Mr. Gorman's type. We are quite aware—painfully so at times—that Catholics must show at least fifty per cent. more energy and ability than their Protestant neighbors to secure the same success and "kindly feeling"; we are also aware that we have been persecuting men and women who not only have done this, but have done so, and will con-

tinue to do so. The days are rapidly passing away when bigotry and prejudice, begotten of ignorance and hatred, combine to crush a man because he is a Catholic. Once in a while there are flashes in the pan that indicate the fitful sputtering of this hate that worked such havoc in the days gone by. Mr. Gorman's recent utterances are a survival of those days. And this portion of Mr. Gorman's sermon was supposed to be the conciliatory one. Under the spell of these "kindly feelings" the oath "seemed harsh and intolerant." But, the Rev. Mr. Gorman had another thought coming—a second guess, and a sober one. "A sober second thought" he calls it. "It was," he said, "the only pledge they had of the Protestant belief of the Sovereign." We are not aware that the heavens would fall if the Sovereign of England were a Catholic—there were many of them before now, and they were, as a rule, pretty fair rulers, even under the light of the most bigoted of Protestant historians. England has suffered from religious persecution, but we should like to ask who was the instigator of this persecution. We should like to ask whether these persecutions began before Henry VIII. apostatized or not; we should like to ask whether these persecutions resulted from the Catholic belief of Henry VIII. or from the lust and greed that drove him to establish the Anglican Church against the will of the English people; we should like to ask whether these persecutions were continued and enlarged under Edward VI. as a result of his Catholic teachings and learnings. Mary—"Bloody Mary"—is credited with the most atrocious persecutions; with persecutions that Protestant historians have taken the utmost pains to dilate upon; with persecutions that had as their foundation in fact, the vivid imagination of these same bigots; with persecutions that never took place. Elizabeth came, and is called "The Good." She persecuted, but her persecutions are veiled; she burned at the stake, but the fires are quenched in history, as it is taught in our Public schools; she acted the religious tyrant, but she is called "The Good." And so it is all down the line. The time is past when the Rev. J. F. Gorman, or any other narrow-minded bigot, can falsify history. People are too enlightened in these days to swallow their statements without a grimace. As a result of this "sober second thought" the Rev. Mr. Gorman grows wise and utters his wisdom thus: "Self-preservation is the first law of life, and this declaration has been imposed on the Sovereign in sheer self-defence." Even granting—which we by no manner of means do—that this oath was absolutely necessary for self-preservation in the days when it was inserted in the Coronation oath, we fail to see why it should be retained in these days of the "kindest feelings." We are living amicably. The time has passed in Britain when men fly at one another's throats on religious questions. The Anglicans themselves are indulging in a rather bitter family affair, but it is a family affair, a kind of squabble that concerns them alone, and which we hope to see settled soon in the only possible way—the coming over to Catholicism, "the coming home," as Dr. Langtry would say, of the better and most conscientious element in the Anglican communion. Mr. Gorman then goes on to show that the Brahmin and Hottentot are more entitled to consideration than the Catholic, because the former "never tried to drive their doctrines down people's throats at the point of the sword." We imagine that Mr. Gorman must have been fairly off his feet at this stage of the sermon; we can picture him to ourselves waving his arms in the air, with hair disheveled and with froth at the mouth. The awful sword swallowing feat that Protestants were obliged to give exhibitions of in England must have been horrible in the retrospect to the rev. gentleman. Our memory is not too strong, but we cannot call to mind anything of this "point of the sword" game that was played upon Protestants by Catholic overlords. It is quite true that James II. fled to Ireland, and was supported there by a sturdy and loyal people, who fought for him as their lawful sovereign as they should have done, and did better than that poltroon deserved. We can recall, however, the attempt by Elizabeth to force the Catholics of Ireland to swallow Protestantism at the "point of the sword" and have no difficulty in bringing to mind Cromwell's "Connought or hell"

programmes; we readily recall William III. and the Peace of Limerick, together with the atrocities he perpetrated in the name of Protestantism in the campaign leading up to that violation. We have very little difficulty in remembering the Penal Laws under which Catholics were hounded for two hundred years. All these things are suggested by Rev. J. F. Gorman, but we fail to see that in these days of enlightenment and calm reasoning; in these days of tolerance and "kindly feelings," that the King of England should be called upon to insult ten millions of his subjects. He is our King and Sovereign. We give him our allegiance; we fight his battles; we are loyal and true, and we fail to see why one section—and a large one too—of the subjects of the Empire should be treated not only as outcasts, but even as traitors.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT

We have received from "Honest Enquirer" a long and somewhat intricate statement of a matrimonial case. As the case is particular, its explanation is of no general interest. Furthermore, like most of these cases, it involves circumstances the details of which are not proper material for newspaper columns. If "Honest Enquirer" will permit us to answer him in private correspondence, and send us his full address, we shall be happy to respect his confidence, and go into a full discussion upon the subject. We may say that the case as presented offers no great difficulty, and that ecclesiastical, canonical legislation has amply provided for it. We do not care about opening our column to the discussion of subjects which cannot be treated properly in the public press.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Mr. Thomas O'Donnell's addressing of the British House of Commons in Irish must have been a treat—to the Irish.

The Irish members of the British House of Commons are prepared for a fight to a finish with anything and everything that does not suit them. No members of the party shall be permitted to pair with either Liberals or Conservatives. All must be present at every sitting to do their own voting. We see lively times ahead for the British House of Commons.

The Police Commissioners of Toronto have decided to have a police inspection of workshops and factories to see that they are provided with means to escape in case of fire. It is quite time that something was being done along these lines. A part is good, but it seems impossible to have the effort sustained for any length of time. We have not heard of any of the other cities or towns making a move in this direction. It is hardly likely that Toronto factories are the only ones in Canada that lack proper fire escapes.

As a result of a crusade against saloons in Leavenworth, Kansas, following directly as a result of the Carrie Nation raids, there occurred a shooting fatally last week. The wife of the proprietor of a whiskey joint had the top of her head shot off by a shot gun in the hands of a mob of farmers who had entered the saloon with the purpose of wrecking the place. Four arrests have been made, and further trouble is anticipated. Meanwhile Mrs. Nation, the cause of the trouble, was in jail, refusing to put up a bond of \$2,000 to keep the peace. Mrs. Nation should be left in jail until such time as her fanatical efforts may have time to simmer down. Murder is a very serious thing, and there promises to be more of it unless this virago is speedily suppressed.

Mr. Thomas O'Donnell does not propose to allow the recent squelching he received in his attempt to introduce the Irish language in the British House of Commons, to interfere with his programme. He lays down the following method of his future proceedings:

"Immediately after the two Irish amendments to the King's speech have been debated, I shall claim the attention of the Speaker, periodically and incessantly, each time speaking Irish. Not till I am suspended for disorderly conduct shall I desist. I shall refuse to subside only when I have been knocked down forcibly and dragged from my place. When the House's Sergeant-at-arms appears on the scene the en-

tire membership of the Irish party will come to my support, and the chances for trouble are fair.

Mr. O'Donnell asserts that his determination to talk Irish at Westminster aims at compelling the recognition of the language as a national institution rather than at disturbing the peace of the House of Commons. Mr. O'Donnell is one of the youngest members of the British Parliament, being only twenty-nine years of age. He is the member for West Kerry, and resides at Killorglin.

His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII., celebrated the anniversary of his election to the Pontificate on Wednesday of last week. He is in excellent health and spirits, and promises well to reach the hundred mark, a point that he is aiming at not for the mere sake of living, but that he may perfect his already glorious reign over the Church. The rigor of his recent encyclical indicates that the greatest mind of the age has not been clouded, but has rather gained in power and clear-sightedness, in the long years of ceaseless toil that it has been subjected to. It is quite safe to say that in all the years of our Holy Father's work he has not made a single personal enemy. Affable and kind; easy of approach and pleasant of speech, the greatest old man of the century has acquired the good will and admiration of the whole world. He is the last of a great age of mental giants, and that he, the greatest of all, may live to see his fondest hopes realized, and his most cherished plans matured, is the wish and prayer, not only of all Catholics throughout the world, but also of thousands of those who are not members of our great Church.

There is a report going the rounds of the daily papers that Monsignor Falconio, the Papal Delegate at Ottawa, will be transferred to Washington, where he will take the place of Monsignor Martinelli, the Papal Delegate to the United States. Mgr. Martinelli will, according to the despatches from Rome, be created cardinal at the coming consistory in Rome on March 21, an event which will fix his residence in Italy for the future. Mgr. Falconio has endeared himself to the Catholics of Canada, in the short time that he has been with us, and we shall be very sorry to lose him; but, in going to the United States he shall have greater opportunities of exercising his acknowledged talents, and of doing more good than he could accomplish here. The United States Catholics will feel proud of their new delegate—quite as proud of him as we here in Canada do. Mgr. Martinelli is an able man, and Mgr. Falconio will just about fill his place in the hearts of the neighboring republic. If the report is true, then we congratulate the American Catholics in getting a man of just about the same type as the one they are losing; if the report be false, we rejoice in the fact that our beloved Delegate will be with us yet for a while. The press despatch announcing Mgr. Falconio's removal to Washington does not name a successor for him at Ottawa.

Some time ago Catharine Leslie, the able editor of the Woman's page of The Sunday World, took occasion to give a severe rebuke to the silly women and girls who daily hang about the Princess theatre in this city so that they may get a glimpse of the actors and actresses as they come out of that place of amusement. We felt at the time that the article was one that hit the nail on the head, and we were sure that it would accomplish its purpose. While some good may have been done, there yet remains much to do. Recently, with the thermometer ranging below zero, we saw fully a hundred women and girls blocking King street awaiting the coming out of the actors. They were not all girls either—many of them were well up in the forties. As The World said, these specimens of womanhood are degrading themselves in bowing before these fourth rate actors; they are dragging down the dignity they should possess, and trampling it under foot. It is utterly disgusting. Language fails one in the attempt to characterize such unwomanly curiosity; such adoration of genius (?). We wonder whether these girls have any homes: if they have, they must be gloriously well-ordered ones. It is a pity that the policeman who stood by, evidently to see that there should be no riot, could not arrest the whole crowd as vagrants.