

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

Varied are the opinions of men, and of important men, on the subject of citizenship. Not every one has the same idea regarding the requirements, or qualities necessary to constitute true civic worth. President Roosevelt has recently written a very interesting essay on the subject. He is certainly a good illustration of the "all-around citizen." In the military and civic spheres; in almost every office of importance, up to Governor of a State and President of a Republic, he has evidenced a strong individuality and a determination of character. He expatiates upon the required qualities of honesty, (public and private), courage, (physical and moral), common sense, and a sentiment of fraternal patriotism. In all this the President states plain truths, and none can gainsay the exactness of his estimate. But there is lacking one important quality—religion. We find in the President's remarks the expression of a sincere and public-spirited man; but we miss that element, so conducive to and necessary for good citizenship, which the Catholic Church alone supplies. The "fixed principles" that the Church demands in the citizen are overlooked by the one who contemplates civic life from a purely human standpoint. Take the following extracts from an able address, on "Principles of Civic Virtue," delivered recently by Rev. Aloysius P. Brosnan, S.J., of Woodstock College. We cannot reproduce the whole text, for lack of space, although every line in it has its weight, still these few extracts will suffice to show how conducive to good citizenship, in any country, are the principles inculcated by the Catholic Church.

"The external marks of good citizenship must spring from fixed and unchanged principles. It is these which make the outward deed worthy. The man who has no motive but his personal aims could as well be a traitor as a patriot. The virtues which go to make a good citizen must come from the heart. There are three great principles of the Catholic Church from which spring civic virtue.

"First, a deep, strong love and reverence for civil authority. What is that attitude of the Catholic Church towards this authority? Put it in contrast with the theories of those outside.

"The Catholic Church says civil authority is a thing divine, God's authority is a thing divine, God's gift as a gift from heaven to the newborn children of God. Man is a social being. Civil society is not possible without an overruling, binding authority. It is from above and must be revered, loved and executed by the ruler as well as obeyed by his subjects.

"Rome deified the man in author-

ity. Catholic faith proclaims obedience to God who invests the man with authority. The Catholic Church holds the authority unsullied no matter how base the man to whom it is entrusted. It commanded obedience in the subjects, but quelled its abuse by tyrants. To sin in each case was to sin against God.

"The second great Catholic principle of civil authority is that it is the spirit of fraternity that nourishes and sustains good government—that generous, large-hearted fraternity that makes man helpful to his fellow-man in distress. This principle cannot rest on a selfish structure nor on a much vaunted humanitarianism which is self-interest transferred from the individual to the body. Even animals have love for their own kind. The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man are distinctively and exclusively Catholic teaching. Man was created God's servant, not His child. A new act made him by grace what he was not by creation. He is brother to the brother Christ. Is that only dogma and nothing more?

"The third and last great principle of the Catholic Church in its relations to civic virtue is the true and clear recognition of the manhood of a man. The ideal citizen does not lose his identity. If you kill a man's self-respect you kill his virtue as well. Teach man he is the kinsman of the brute and take his fashioning out of God's hands and you leave him with nothing more than mechanical action. Man was made to know, love and serve God here on earth and after that to enjoy Him in heaven. He must be taught his duty, the magic words 'I ought.' We cannot gauge mankind by intellectual progress or by strength of arms. The royalty of virtue makes the true man. Holiness makes his kingship.

"The Catholic Church, and she alone, first gave the right place and honor to noble womanhood and proclaimed her the peer of man and made the world bow down in reverence to the high holiness of the fairest of God's creatures, the Mother of Christ. The power of the Catholic Church's teaching gave woman the high place she holds to-day if she only has sense enough to hold on to it.

"The good of the fatherland is peculiarly the motive for civic virtue. The Catholic Church does not despise the natural motives, but she supernaturalizes them by her prayers and her grace-giving sacraments. There is no doubt as to the attitude of the Catholic Church. A man cannot be true to her tenets and be untrue to his citizenship. The banner of the Catholic soldiers of the eldest daughter of the Church was wont to bear the legend, 'For God and France and Marguerite,' which could be translated into, 'For God, for fatherland, for wife and home.'

NEW YORK'S NEW MARRIAGE LAWS.

By a statute which was passed by the legislature last winter common law marriage is to be abolished in New York State on and after January 1. The bill was introduced by Assemblyman John A. Weekes, of that city, who secured its passage after a fight of two years.

The exact provisions which are to govern the making and filing of a marriage contract under the Weekes law are as follows:

The written contract must be signed by both parties and at least two witnesses.

It shall state the place of residence of the contracting parties and of the witnesses.

It shall give the time and place of the marriage.

It must be acknowledged by the parties and witnesses in the manner required for the acknowledgment of a conveyance of real estate, to enable it to be recorded.

It shall be filed within six months after its execution in the office of the clerk of the city or town where the marriage took place.

When the certificate is presented at the office of the town or city clerk, it must be filed and entered in a book kept by him in alphabetical order.

The fee for filing the certificate is 25 cents, and for a certified copy of a certificate or contract of matrimony, 10 cents.

The above extracts are taken from a regular daily newspaper. Commenting on this new piece of

legislation our esteemed contemporary, the "Catholic Union and Times," of Buffalo, under the title "A Bill which Degrades Marriage," says—

With the dawn of the new year a law will be in operation whereby parties to a marriage may dispense with the presence of a clergyman, provided they draw up a marriage contract and have it recorded like any other public document. As is the case with legal prescriptions which have received attention from those skilled in the drafting of enactments, this unchristian law contains provisions which we may overlook at present since they regard only the practical working of the measure adopted by the august legislature of our state.

The primary aim of this bit of legislation is to secure a certain class of men from becoming victims of the adventuress, but its scope for evil is far wider than the practice against which it is offered as a remedial agent. It is fundamentally wrong from the view both of morals and of policy to treat the marriage contract as a purely civil affair, which may be dissolved by the parties most interested at any time specified in the agreement. The adage that the family hearthstone is the nation's cornerstone receives a rude shock when legislation permits the married couple to dissolve their relations as soon as the marital yoke begins to galling. For it is in the essence of a purely civil contract that dissolution may obtain through mutual agreement, and unless marriage be hinged about with sacramental

dignity it will be regarded as no more than a partnership limited in its duration, not by the hallowed promise "till death do us part," but to such time only as may be satisfactory to the contracting parties.

Legislation will never succeed in removing from the minds of God-fearing people the conviction that marriage must be sanctified by a religious ceremony, and that a duly empowered minister of the altar must preside at the nuptials. Catholics especially are aware that marriage as a purely civil contract is impossible between Christians, no matter what the State may decide concerning the question. The doctrine of our Church tells us that as soon as baptized persons pronounce the marriage vows validly, the sacrament of matrimony ensues. This sacred nature of Christian marriage

removes the matrimonial contract from the jurisdiction of the State, leaving it where it belongs under the supervision of the Church, which alone has the right to determine what elements affect the union or dissolution of the bond.

It is not to be feared that Catholics will avail themselves of the free and easy method which is about to come into operation, any more than they have recourse to the divorce mill to separate what God has joined together. We feel sure that the protests of our co-religionists, and indeed of all self-respecting citizens of this state, will speedily show our legislators how prematurely they have acted, and how disastrous to our common welfare would be the upholding of this specific enactment. It is pestiferous and must be erased from our statute books.

"CHATS WITHIN THE FOLD."

"Chats Within the Fold," from one point of view, is a very timely book, as it reveals a state of mind only too prevalent amongst Catholics. Many Catholics are of the opinion that there is something decidedly out of joint in the Church in this country. Their brethren within the fold are an uncouth, ignorant set, and do not properly represent the teachings of their Church. Churchmen are too conservative, "not knowing the changed ways of a changeful world, and not wishing to know, they keep on beating the toms-toms of other ages." The Church's system of charities is unscientific and antiquated. That non-Catholics are bent on treating the Church unfairly is a bugaboo unworthy of any serious consideration. Such is the cry of this class of Catholics; and Mr. Desmond, in his "Chats," proves himself a worthy exponent of this querulous school. I do not question Mr. Desmond's intentions. No doubt they are well meant. But since he has felt privileged to do a little sermizing, I hope he will not take unkindly to a little in turn.

"A few years ago," says Mr. Desmond, "the work of the earnest Catholic and of the Catholic press was one of vindication. The Church had to be defended on every side. The great body of the American people were not merely misinformed about what we believed and who we were; they were prejudiced against us. Now, because we are more numerous, because we have accustomed the nation to our presence, and because we have struck out energetically against misrepresentation and prejudice, the epoch of vindication has come to an end. Not that we do not still have to explain and refute, but the work of vindication is not solely our task as it was heretofore. We find leisure for something else.

"With the end of the epoch of vindication much of the energy heretofore spent on outward defence will turn to zeal for inward improvement. This is a wholesome and a hopeful situation."

This certainly has the ring of assurance about it. But it does not give us a correct portrayal of the situation, either in principle or in fact.

In the first place, the Church does not recognize the supposed principle that "energy spent on outward defence" can ever work to the detriment of "zeal for inward improvement." The reason is plain. The inward or spiritual life is the source of the energy exerted in outward defence. To have a spirited and robust defence, you must have a correspondingly robust spiritual life. Wherever you find a well-developed zeal and energy exercised in defence, you will find a correspondingly developed spiritual life. It must be so. The stream of energy can not rise higher than its source. A glance at the history of the Church will verify this. Her greatest apologists were her greatest saints; and during those very ages in which she was the most active in defence, she was the most illustrious in the spiritual life of her children. The condition, then, that Mr. Desmond describes never existed in the Church, nor could it exist. If it could the Church would be a strange anomaly indeed. The greatest and most aggressive apologists of the Church in this country, during the very period he speaks of, were men who were deeply spiritual. To-day they are the same—men who live the spiritual life and mirror it in their actions. If the situation were as the writer depicts it, that heretofore we were so deeply engaged in outward defence to the neglect and consequent loss in the spiritual life, it would be neither "wholesome" nor "hopeful." On the contrary, it would be deplorable. But God's ways are not man's ways. His Church entered the world, a divinely organized spiritual power, and prerogatives necessary to fulfil her mission. She has the same character, powers and prerogatives to-day that she had at her birth, because they were given her for all time. "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." She came into the world a spiritual body; for her life is the spiritual life—the life of God,

her Founder. What folly, then, to say that she could exercise any of her functions to the detriment of her spirituality, the very life-giving principle of the function she would use! I will give it at least some air of respectability by calling it bad theology.

I am far from agreeing with the writer that "we have accustomed the nation to our presence," and that, therefore, "the epoch of vindication has come to an end," with the exception of an occasional explanation or refutation. The present state of the world, especially in this country, does not warrant any such conclusion. In commercial, social and political life, no doubt, non-Catholics have become accustomed to us. We can raise just as good corn, wheat and potatoes as the Methodist. We make just as good conductors, managers, clerks or puddlers as the Lutheran or Baptist. Our vote is just as good as the other fellow's who belongs to the Big Church. An occasional one of us is well enough behaved and well enough groomed to be admitted to the higher realms of society. The rest of us move along with the big crowd without much friction. In these relations non-Catholics are quite well satisfied with us. But our religion—they know as little about it as ever, with but very few exceptions. It is alien to them. Some of them seem to be perfectly satisfied with the jarring tenets of sectarianism. The great majority have no religion at all. This is not mere conjecture it is fact.

According to the Independent, one of the most representative non-Catholic journals of the country, out of our 75,000,000 people only 23,000,000 belong to any church. This gives us 52,000,000 of our fellow-countrymen who are practical infidels. Add to this the probable 13,000,000 who belong to the sects and bodies and we have the grand total of 65,000,000 of people in our beloved America who are aliens to the Catholic faith. "He who is not with Me is against Me." Verily, "the epoch of vindication has come to an end."

The situation is aggravated if we consider that every form of superstition, from a refined demonism to the latest revelation of the Pantheistic kaleidoscope—Eddyism, prevails to an alarming extent amongst the so-called educated classes. They are the recognized leaders of the masses, and if they do not succeed in initiating the masses into the higher realms of their various cults, they at least succeed only too well in exercising a pernicious influence over their lives. Literature, the press, and in many instances the Protestant pulpit, are the channels through which they pour their venomous libellations into the minds excepted of the masses. The result is, we have a nation of infidels, dressed, and not all strangers to good manners and soft speech, but corrupt to the core. They will tell you at all this; for they will tell you that they recognize the "Great Grand Ruler, the Giver of all good;" that they set apart a certain time to thank Him for the "good He has given them." But what good do they thank Him for? For a full stomach and a well-stuffed purse. This is the highest conception they have of the "good" for which they were created. The god they thank is not the God of the Christians. It is the god of the heathen—the god that will fill their stomachs, stuff their purses, feed their passions, protect their commerce and win their battles. They are of the earth and have no aspirations beyond it. They are strangers to the God who promises a supernatural reward for a life of holiness and self-denial, and if they have any conception of a future state, it is as a continuation of the "good things" of this life.

The remnant of Protestantism that still lingers with us is not, as some good people would try to convince us, an oasis in this vast desert of unbelief and refined corruption. What is Protestantism? It is a synonym for dissonance, strife, disorder, destruction. Like heretics, with its conflicting beliefs and misbeliefs, creed revisions and Bible revisions, Protestantism has destroyed every vestige of orthodox belief it ever had. Christ is no longer the God-man, but a "great, good Man" who taught a sublime morality, much of which is entirely un-

sued to modern conditions. The Bible is no longer the inspired Word of God, but a "good book," for the most part, containing many things that are "helpful," and many more things that the writers would have done better to have left unsaid. Its course of destruction is complete, and the result is that Christianity has become the butt of supreme ridicule to the masses. It has destroyed the faith of the masses, and if it still utters an occasional truth, that truth is buried so deep beneath the ruins of heterodoxy that its presence is never even suspected. Worse still, the occasional truth it does utter it does so in the name and authority of its heterodoxy. Let us not deceive ourselves. It is Satan who feigns to fight the battles of truth in the name of error. There is, then, no hope that Protestantism will aid in stemming the flood of unbelief and corruption which is fast engulfing the masses; but as long as it remains it will tend only to aggravate it.

Such is the situation that confronts the Church in America. She has a great and worthy conquest before her. She knows it well, and enlightened as she is by Divine Wisdom and guided by the Divine Hand she could never commit the folly of declaring the epoch of vindication at an end. In point of fact, it never ends. The Church knows that on this militant world, the flesh and the devil are her enemies. She never declares a truce with them, nor they with her. Raging more fiercely at one time than at another, the battle is incessant.

The enemy was never more in evidence than now. Satan is in the van. He and his allies have donned new armor, it is true. Old heresies have taken on new forms. Carnal and materialistic heathenism stalks abroad in Christian garb. He himself appears as an angel of light. But the Church knows her old enemy. She will strip him of his steel armor, and lay bare his subtlety and cunning to his own defeat and confusion, and to the eternal joy of the millions whom she will have saved from his grasp. What a glorious conquest awaits her!—Rev. John P. Kearns, in the Catholic Universe, Cleveland.

FIVE MINUTES SERMON.

THE NEW YEAR.—"She departed not from the temple, by fastings and prayers, serving day and night." Luke 2, 37.

How glorious praise does the Holy Ghost give to St. Ann in the gospel. He praises her as a woman who is occupied day and night in the service of God, and in the salvation of her soul, "by fastings and prayers," says Holy Scripture. How precious, in the sight of God, must have been the eighty-four years of her pilgrimage! How rich in virtue and good works, in precious merits for Heaven! How grateful does not St. Ann rejoice in Heaven that she was covetous of time, not permitting a moment to pass without merit for Heaven!

We, too, have received the precious gift of time, that it may be used for eternity, but, alas! how many there are who do not know how to appreciate this admirable gift and who do not wish to use it for the purpose for which it is given. They squander days that are irrevocable in sinful absurdities or in an insane rush after gold, riches, honors and pleasures, when, finally, the hour of death draws nigh and brings bitter remorse, but too late for eternity.

But how will those in eternity think of time, who abused it for their own destruction! Place yourself, in spirit, before the portals of hell, and listen to the voices of the damned, who cry out in woeful lamentation: O God, give us back one moment, only that precious time, in order that we may be reconciled to Thee by penance, and thus change our fiery bonds for a golden crown in Heaven! But, alas! their cries and lamentations are in vain. That one minute will not be given. For them, time has passed, eternity has begun.

Yes, for you, also a day and an hour will come, when you will think and judge of the great value of time, as do the saints in Heaven and the damned in hell. When, at the hour of death, the candle will throw its light on your breaking eyes, you too, will exclaim: Time, O time, how have I neglected you, and now you are gone forever! Then you will promise God with tears and groans that you will make good use of the days He may grant you, but it will be in vain. His justice will cut without mercy the thread of your life, and the which you now squander in sin and folly, will be denied to you for all eternity.

Oh! that we would learn true wisdom, and no longer abuse the precious gift of time to our own destruction, and to making more difficult the account of our stewardship! Oh, that we would henceforth dedicate every day and every hour of our life to the service of God and the salvation of our soul. In a few days, another year of our earthly pilgrimage will be added to our series of years, many of which have been spent so uselessly. A

whole year will have flown into the ocean of eternity, leaving us, for the hour of death, so few consolations, and perhaps so many bitter and painful reminiscences. How many days, weeks, perhaps months, of this year have we spent in the service of the world and its pomps and pleasures, aye, perhaps even in mortal sin, in the death of the soul in enmity with God. How rich in virtue and good works we might have become, had we been faithful in the service of the Most High! But we did not wish it, we had no desire to do so. We preferred to load ourselves with responsibilities, a heavy burden of sins and commissions of duties of all kinds! With sincere sorrow, let us bewail our negligence, and, with bitter tears, pray for God's mercy, and pursue Him, in all sincerity, to spend the coming year which His infinite goodness may grant us, for the benefit of our immortal souls, and by true penance to cancel our sinful indebtedness, so that by a life of virtue in the service of God, we may store up merits for eternity, and prepare ourselves worthily for the terrible hour of death. Perhaps the coming year will be the last of our life. If, during it we spend every day, yes, every hour in such a manner as if we were to be summoned immediately before the judgment seat of God, then, indeed, the new year will become for us one of grace and divine blessings.

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS OF PARIS.

According to the New York "Tribune's" correspondent, the municipal councillors of the city of Paris, under the presidency of M. Selves, Prefect of the Department of the Seine, are holding daily sessions of ten hours each, discussing the Budget for 1902, the expenses of which are estimated at \$67,000,000. This is a sum exceeding any previous yearly expenditure on record at the Hotel de Ville, and exceeding the estimates of 1901 by \$400,000. The situation is aggravated by a deficit of \$2,500,000 in the Budget of 1901. At the session last night Ernest Caron, chairman of the Budget Committee, in a remarkable speech on the financial difficulties of modern municipal governments, stated that the total debt of the city of Paris, was already \$400,000,000; but notwithstanding this fact, it is necessary to issue the new municipal loan recommended by M. Sainloan, president of the Metropolitan Railway Commission, for \$30,000,000 bearing 3 1/2 per cent. interest, secured by the receipts of the Metropolitan system and the construction of cross lines. The Municipal Council seems to favor the idea of a new loan, which will probably be voted before the end of the year. It seems inevitable that Parisians, already the most heavily taxed municipal population in the world, must next year have new burdens imposed upon them. The Municipal Council is eagerly discussing the particular kind of taxation. Among the various schemes proposed are a dollar capitation tax, taxes on books, additional taxes on real estate, increased water rates, etc. At yesterday's session several items of expenditure of the last year were severely criticized. For instance, a city printing bill for \$173,000, \$60,000 for towels and washing linen and \$56,000 for cab hire.

NOTES IN CIRCULATION.

Tomlinson notes to the amount of \$27,671,452.05 were outstanding on June 30, 1901, as against \$26,044,923.52 on June 30 of the previous year, or an increase of \$1,576,528.53. The increasing volume of the business of the Dominion, the Deputy Minister of Finance says, is doubtless the principal cause of this expansion of the circulation, but a part of it is apparently attributable to the fact that the chartered banks are approaching the limit of the circulation allowed by the terms of the bank act, and are using Dominion issues where ordinarily their own notes would be employed.

CONSCIENCE MONEY.

The Washington Government ought to be glad the Catholic Church exists. Said a dispatch from that city on a recent Friday: "Treasurer Roberts has received from an unknown person a conscience contribution of \$420. The money was received through Father V. A. Raggio, S.J., pastor of St. Clare Church, Santa Clara, California."

AN AUSTRALIAN PRIEST.

Rev. P. M. Ryan, who is visiting his old home in England, after an absence of 15 years, had the grim satisfaction of reading his own "Memoriam," and found he had been praised for as dead for several years. The mistake was caused by the death of another priest of the same name in Sydney, Australia.

WOMEN MAKE PROTESTS.

A notable protest of the Catholic womanhood of the German and Austrian empires, and of Switzerland against the assaults upon the confessional, and with it the coming jubilee, was presented to the Pope, recently, bearing 90,000 signatures.