

reach of federal jurisdiction, when will public law begin to interpose? Moreover, if public order is in jeopardy through the sanction of such a law as would disturb and even seriously impair the civil status of a large portion of the community, why not strenuously oppose the interference of any invidious authority? This is not a question of emergency or expediency. Even natural law would be doomed to complete destruction, were such perversion of higher rule as the one exemplified by the historical demonstration of the writer to prevail. I hope the partisans of state supremacy will ponder, and yield to the more benignant influence of Christianity and to the claims of social and individual liberty.

Notwithstanding his misconception of the principles of natural law which God has inculcated into the heart of every human being, notwithstanding his imperfect knowledge of canon law, the author of the article is himself forced to the conclusion that there exists among those friendly to the doctrine of divorce a feeling far superior to the dictates of public law, capable of checking a violent or deluded attempt against public or private morality. The statistics with which the article is replete, coupled with quotations from important speeches delivered by talented juriconsults on the floor of the Parliament of Canada, give special strength to the above notions in regard to the indissolubility of marriage. In fact, no better argument than an argument based upon the authority of experience, as recorded in the life of civilized countries, can be propounded or adduced against domestic depravity and the influence of vicious legislation. The writer must be congratulated on his historical and retrospective demonstration. In dealing with the religious aspect of that question, there is, as regards the Catholic population of this country, an objection far more serious than the above feeling—it is the doctrine of the Roman Church on the indissolubility of marriage. That doctrine is a dogma which binds every man born and living in communion with the Catholic Church. According to it marriage is not only considered as a civil contract but as a sacrament of a divine origin, whose rulings are sacred and cannot be ignored.

As a matter of conscience, no Catholic can vote for a bill or any legislation purporting to sanction a demand for divorce. Nay, more, and notwithstanding the authority of the "public law" invoked by the writer, a Catholic who, after having obtained from Parliament such a demand should marry again during the life of the other party, would *ipso facto* be in open rebellion with his church, and is liable to excommunication. This rule of the Catholic Church must be obeyed by all those who profess to submit to it. "M.M." is at liberty to accept or repudiate said doctrine. In fact he does not even propose to discuss the question, but in support of his argument he quotes certain ordinances and propositions of canon law about whose exact meaning he feels rather perplexed. Forsooth, he is in error, when he pretends that the canon of indissolubility must be held as the arbitrary interpretation of the Catholic Church as represented in the Council of Trent. The principles advocated by such French writers as Pothier, Merlin, cited by the correspondent, have no solid foundation in the face of the solemn and sacred teaching of the Gospel and the history of the Catholic religion. Pothier and Merlin were imbued with Gallicanism, and their books, although containing brilliant and generally sound erudition on purely civil matters, have been influenced on religious questions by the spirit of the age, favorable to the doctrine of divorce. Respecting, as I do, the religious convictions of "M.M.," I cannot reproach him with his sympathy for such eminent doctors, but, in all frankness, I must tell the Protestant gentleman that Rome will never consent to accept their dictum on matters of faith or ecclesiastical discipline.

Having thus expounded the dogmatic view of the question I will now revert to the legal issue. The learned critic admits the important fact that the civil law of the province of Quebec (Art. 185, Code of Civil Law) proclaims the indissolubility of marriage. The Article quoted is the best answer to his fine display of legal science and powerful array of authorities. On what possible ground a law so clear and so positive, enacted for the protection and maintenance of the civil status of the subject and the equal rights between