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A DANGEROUS AND IMMORAL THEORY OF MARRIAGE.

Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, though denying in general for many years past all Christianity, did not venture to maintain in public the gross doctrine of Free Love which is most commonly held by those who have renounced the Christian faith.

It may be presumed that the notorious infidel was hitherto restrained by a regard for public opinion, and for his own good name to take this view, and we may suppose that on similar ground he favored the marriage which is indissoluble except by the death of the husband or wife.

But recently the colonel appears to have changed his tactics. What must be the reason of this we can only conjecture. It is barely possible that he has had family troubles; but even if this be the case it is not most unreasonable to import into a discussion on the code of morality whereby the whole community should be governed, the whimsical ideas which occur to an individual on account of some special circumstances which exist only in his own case?

On this point we can only speak hypothetically, as we have no positive information, but as the colonel has actually openly advocated practical Free Love of late, it is rendered probable that some such reason as we have indicated is the cause of his change of base.

In a recent article which has appeared in several United States papers, Col. Ingersoll puts forward the following as an indubitable principle:

"Without pure, honest, mutual love there can be no real marriage. When love ceases marriage ceases also; the tie is dissolved ipso facto, and the party who no longer loves is at liberty to seek and form another tie, and the unloved party to the transaction would act infamously if he or she should attempt to deprive the other party of liberty."

Stripped of all the verbiage of rhetoric this is Col. Ingersoll's reasoning, or rather his assertion, for it is sustained only on the fact that it is his opinion. He does not attempt to prop it up by solid reasons founded on the nature of the obligations imposed by marriage.

We have sometimes heard and read of the singular notions of some people that it is right to murder a seducer or a paramour. This opinion is based upon a strong sense of the wrong inflicted by the violator of the sacredness of marriage; but Col. Ingersoll's new theory is based upon the contrary opinion, that marriage has no sacred character at all, but may be dissolved at will by the contracting parties, or by the fancy of one of the parties, that he or she has been married long enough. This is a justification of Free Love, and of every crime against the obligations of the married state.

From two such opposite opinions as

we have here referred to, both of which are maintained with an equal appearance of right, if the authority of the Christian religion is to be put aside, we may see to what vagaries men will be led if they act upon their private fancies as the supreme judge of what system of morality should prevail. We need a divine guide to lead us aright in morals, and that guide we have in Christ and His teachings; but as Christ is no longer visible on earth, His Church is authorized to direct us in the moral principles by which we should live. Guided by the Church of God, we know that both Colonel Ingersoll and those who would wreak vengeance by private authority on wrongdoers, offend against the divine law. But we have here to consider only the question which has been put forward by the notorious infidel leader. Is it true that when a husband or wife is tired of marriage he or she may declare the marriage at an end?

If this be true, marriage is entirely subject to the whims of each individual. Such a hypothesis is contrary to the nature and purpose of marriage, and to the needs of human society. This theory has no thought or consideration for the interests of mankind, or society, or of the children.

The preservation of society, including the education and care of the children, constitutes the chief end of marriage, and not the mere passing pleasure of the individual. It is true that in the selection of a husband or wife, the individuals may select to suit themselves, but this is altogether a secondary consideration in comparison with the chief end of marriage, and, therefore, even independently of the requirements of religion, nature itself dictates that when the selection is made the public good requires that the marriage should be indissoluble in order that the duties of the parents toward each other and towards their offspring may be properly fulfilled. The education and moral training of children requires that they should have the care of both parents. So that even if the moral law on the subject were doubtful it would be expedient that civil laws should be enacted making marriage indissoluble. But the moral law is clear even as nature itself dictates it to the human mind and heart, and it is to the effect that the husband should cling to his wife, and the wife to her husband. But beyond this we have the unmistakable pronouncement of the Christian law as it comes from the lips of the Saviour of mankind, that what God hath joined together no man is permitted to put asunder.

The individual must limit his pleasures to those which are calculated to contribute to, or at least which are not opposed to the general good and the preservation of the human race, and therefore he cannot be allowed to please his fancies to such an extent as to break up the marriage tie, which was instituted in the first place for the preservation of the human species. Unreasoning animals are ruled by a natural instinct in regard to the manner in which their young are to be cared for, but man must be subject to the control of reason, and of considerations for the general good of the human race. These considerations show Colonel Ingersoll's theory to be grossly immoral and dangerous to society, and therefore society cannot afford to allow them to be acted on in real life.

Our Blessed Lord, while dwelling on earth, was obedient to His mother, as we learn from Holy Scripture, and it was at her request that He wrought His first miracle at the marriage feast of Cana. So we may rely that when she pleads in heaven for us, her children, her petitions will be also received graciously. The Rosary is an effective and heart touching devotion. It is composed of those prayers which are most powerful with God: the Lord's prayer, made by Our Lord Himself and communicated to us by Him; the Hail Mary, composed by the Archangel Gabriel, St. Elizabeth, and the Church of God, and the Apostles' Creed, whereby we repeat in the words of the chosen companions and friends of our divine Saviour the chief mysteries of religion, as they learned them from Him. The name Rosary signifies a bed of roses, and it is applied to this devotion because the prayers composing it are as sweet-scented flowers the odor of which reaches heaven.

DIVORCE LAWS.

United States papers inform us that the movement in favor of having a uniform divorce law passed whereby the same causes for divorce will hold good in all the States, is making headway, though the matter is being very quietly pushed. There is a committee at work systematically under the name of the Uniform Law Committee, which has drawn up a bill to be presented first to the National Bar Association of the United States for approval, after which an effort will be made to have the Legislatures of all the States adopt it, so that it may become the general law, and an end be put to the scandal, misery and crime which take place under the present diversified system whereby each State has its own conditions under which divorces are granted.

There is no doubt that some such measure as that contemplated if universally adopted, would considerably reduce the scandalous results of the present system, under which the number of divorces granted from year to year is constantly increasing, for to such an extent has it already grown that at the present moment there are more divorces granted in the United States than in all the world besides, exclusive of Turkey and other half-civilized Mahometan countries. Yet it can

scarcely be expected that the proposed law will entirely remedy the existing evil, though it may modify it to some extent. The evil will not be entirely removed until the indissolubility of marriage be re-established in accordance with the law of Christianity—an object which the proposed uniform law is not intended to effect. It will still leave several causes for divorce, and it is to be expected that these causes will be interpreted with varying strictness in the several States, thus still affording an opportunity for parties seeking divorce to leave their own State for the purpose of entering their suit in another where the laws are administered with greater laxity.

It will, besides, be very difficult, if not impossible, to induce so many States as there are now in the Union, to pass an identical law, as the notions of the people of the different localities are very divergent in regard to the magnitude of the causes for which divorces should be granted. Nevertheless, even if the proposed law should be adopted by a large number of the States, it will be at all events a step in advance toward restoring marriage to its sacredness and inviolability, and even one step forward will greatly improve the present unsatisfactory and demoralizing condition whereby married life is without stability.

THE HOLY ROSARY.

The present month of October is especially devoted by the Church to the beautiful devotion of the Rosary, which because of the many palpable proofs of God's approval which have been granted on account of the devout recitation of the prayers which accompany it, has become one among the most popular devotions of the Catholic Church.

Our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII, has issued an encyclical letter addressed to all the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries of the Church, in which he strongly commends this admirable devotion.

The Holy Father reminds us of the last words of Jesus, said on the cross to St. John the Evangelist, to His beloved disciples: "Behold thy mother." By these words, Mary His Mother was made the spiritual mother of St. John and of all Christians, as the holy Evangelist is to be regarded on this occasion as the representative of all Christians, for each of whom Christ died as truly and fully as if He had suffered for no one else. We are, equally with or more than the loved evangelist, in need of such a mother who will intercede and plead for us at the foot of the divine throne to her Omnipotent Son.

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The Holy Father remarks in his Encyclical that we devote two months of the year to the special cultivation of a spirit of devotion and affection for Mary the mother of God: May, the month of flowers, and October the month of fruits, "because it is fitting that these two seasons should be consecrated to her who has said of herself: 'My flowers are the fruit of honor and riches.'"

The intrinsic efficacy of the devotion of the Rosary lies in the excellence of the prayers used in it, but the Holy Father points out that this efficacy is increased by its adaptability as a form of united prayer. The Confraternity of the Holy Rosary extends throughout the whole Church, and has an antiquity above all similar institutions, having been founded by the great St. Dominic, and having grown marvellously during the present century. Much of the rapidity of this growth is due to the encouragement given by Pope Leo XIII, and he adds in his encyclical that

"those who employ this method of praying can never fail to obtain fruit. . . . In truth the Rosary of Mary unites the faithful who practice this devotion by a common bond similar to that existing among brothers, or soldiers living in the same tent. Thus is formed a well-disciplined army most powerful against all enemies from without or within." And to the members of the association of the Rosary he applies the words of St. Cyprian: "We have a public and common prayer, and when we pray, it is not for one alone, but for all the people, because we are all united people."

The Rosary has also been called the Psalter of Mary, because, like the collection of one hundred and fifty Psalms which form the Psalter of David, it contains the Angelical Salutation, or Hail Mary, repeated one hundred and fifty times.

Mary is undoubtedly the most powerful among the saints with her Divine Son, and as we know that the prayers of the just are powerful with God, even while they are still on earth, their prayers must be still more powerful in heaven, and we read in the book of the Apocalypse that the prayers of the saints are as a sweet incense offered by the hands of angels, ascending before the throne of God. The sweetest of this incense is the prayer which the Mother of God offers for her children who are on earth.

There is no derogation from the honor due to God when we ask the Blessed Virgin or the saints to pray for us, for our manner of prayer is essentially different in the two cases. O God we ask grace and mercy, of the saints we ask help, and that they may pray to God for us, and of this help we are greatly in need.

By the instrumentality of the Holy Rosary many graces have been and are daily obtained from Almighty God, and for this reason successive Popes have done much to foster this devotion among the faithful, and numerous indulgences have been annexed to its devout recitation. Pius V. has said that by it "the faithful of Christ are suddenly changed into other men: the darkness of heresy is dissipated, and the light of Catholic faith revealed." Pope Leo XIII. also expresses the hope that the Rosary prayers as they go on unceasingly, issuing from the lips and hearts of a great multitude, will prove most powerful in gaining for mankind the favor of God.

A MORMON CONFERENCE.

Another event which brings into prominence the vagaries of the human mind is the Conference of Mormons (who also call themselves Latter Day Saints) which took place in Toronto last week. About 300 delegates were present from outside, and with members of the organization residing in the city the total number in attendance was about 350.

The gathering was chiefly remarkable for the presence of Joseph Smith, the present prophet of that section of Mormonism which would not follow the leadership of Brigham Young, of Salt Lake City. The present Joseph Smith is the son of the founder of Mormonism, who was of the same name.

It is claimed that this branch of the Mormon Church in Canada has a membership of 2,600, a considerable proportion of which is in London and its vicinity.

The original Joseph Smith started Mormonism in New York State in 1830. He was the son of a Vermont farmer, and when a boy was regarded as being of a visionary and shiftless character. In his own account of himself he declares that he went from one denomination to another, but could find nothing to satisfy his religious longings, "nothing but a clash in religious sentiment."

It was in 1825, when he was eighteen years of age that he received the second visit of a "personage," as he terms him, who, according to his story, had a countenance like lightning, and who proclaimed himself to be an angel of God, and desired him to teach the new gospel, which was soon to be revealed to him, and to be preached to all the nations. His visitor informed him that certain plates were deposited in a hill near Palmyra, in which there were to be found the records of certain ancient prophets who had existed in America at an early date. These plates he was to view, though he was not yet holy enough to take possession of them.

It was in 1827 that he claimed to have received possession of these plates, which he was enabled to read by the medium of two transparent stones to which he gave the scriptural

names of Urim and Thummim. The characters on the plates represented an unknown language called Reformed Egyptian.

The writing which he professed to make by translating from these plates was called the Book of Mormon, which has been accepted by the Mormons as of equal authority with the Bible. The book is so named from the supposed prophet who made the record. It professes to contain the history of the earliest-aborigines of America.

Oliver Cowdery, one of Smith's first disciples, wrote the book at the dictation of the latter, who was confessedly a poor writer. Smith, while professing to read the plates, sat behind a blanket to keep the sacred writing from profane view.

These supposed plates have never been produced publicly, but eight witnesses attested that they had seen them. These were the first Mormons, and among them were Smith's father and two brothers, whose characters were not regarded as worse than unimpeachable. None but these eight have ever seen these plates, and though a sight of these has been frequently demanded, the only knowledge of them which the general public have is derived from what these witnesses have asserted.

It has been shown on very good authority that the Book of Mormon is in reality borrowed or stolen from a romance written by a former clergyman named Solomon Spalding, but which no publisher cared to print, because of its insipidity.

The book of Mormon was published in 1830, and the new sect soon received many American adherents. From this time Mormonism was fiercely attacked by the various Protestant ministers and their followers, who finally drove the Mormons first from New York, and afterward successively from Kirtland, Ohio, Clay county, Missouri and Nauvoo, Illinois. John Smith, the prophet, and his brother Hyram were shot by a mob of about two hundred persons when the settlement at the last named place was broken up in 1844.

It is to the interest of the Mormons now to disclaim the intolerably criminal doctrine of polygamy, and the present Joseph Smith declared in Toronto that the sect proper never held that doctrine, for the teaching of which he throws the blame on the schismatical Brigham Young, whom he calls the "apostate." He says it was Brigham Young who, claiming to be the successor of the Mormon prophet, taught polygamy, which is forbidden in the Mormon bible.

As a matter of fact the original Joseph Smith taught the doctrine of "Celestial Marriage" as early as 1835. This was actual polygamy, and in 1843 he proclaimed that he had received a formal revelation from heaven authorizing polygamy. It was this proclamation, which was put then into practice, which chiefly excited the Methodists, Baptists, Campbellites and other sects against Mormonism, though the fraudulent suspension of Kirtland Mormon Bank, and the previous hatred in which Mormonism was held in New York, contributed also toward inflaming the passions of the mob against the leader whom they held to be responsible for all these things.

We have not space at disposal now for a history of the Mormon imposture and superstition, which would be a dark tale, especially if we were to include its doings in the territory of Utah. We shall therefore conclude this short sketch by saying that the success of the Mormon missionaries who looked for converts in European countries is surprising. It was limited, however, almost entirely to the Protestant countries, as Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Germany. In Catholic countries, and especially in Ireland, it found few dupes.

Mormonism is destined to disappear, as so many sects of past ages have done. It cannot withstand the influence which civilization is bringing to bear upon it in its stronghold; and the influx of bold Gentiles into Utah has already weakened the power which it formerly exercised upon the population of that territory, which is now one of the sovereign States.

It appears from a recent interview which Prince Bismarck had with the representative of an Italian paper, that the man of iron appreciates the high intellect and noble character of Pope Leo XIII. Speaking of the Pope, the ex-Chancellor of Germany said: "He has by far the most elevated mind and the loftiest intelligence of any man of our age."

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF APAISM.

Apaism has been virtually defunct in the United States since the last presidential campaign was fairly begun, and its newspaper organs have, for the most part, either ceased to exist, or have laid aside their special A. P. A. character. In some States, however, efforts are still made to keep it in a kind of half alive state. In spite of all this, even in Omaha and Kansas city, where it has ruled supreme for many years, the proscriptive society is losing its power, and Catholics are not entirely excluded now from offices under control of the municipal councils. It is now stated that Catholics have found their way into the police force of these localities, and in one of them, Kansas City, a Catholic has even been appointed recently to the position of Chief of Police.

It could not be expected that, with the spread of intelligence, the bigotry which has hitherto prevailed should long continue to hold sway in a country where the people are generally imbued with a love of liberty, and where the principles of toleration are recognized in the State and National constitutions.

The A. P. A. leaders have also, by their conduct, contributed to their own downfall. The peculations and defalcations of Apaisit municipal authorities in Kansas city and Omaha have raised much popular indignation against the whole society, and in Oregon, Washington State, and California at least three of the leaders are now in jail for various crimes, and four are fugitives from justice. Most of these are Methodist ministers, and clergy of other denominations, but some are laymen. The latest example of this class is the Rev. W. T. Ford of the State of Washington, who has been minister of a Methodist Episcopal Church in Seattle, and had formerly been a pastor in Idaho. He became one of the most virulent anti-Catholic agitators on the Pacific slope, and though he was not financially a success as a minister; he received a good deal of money as an A. P. A. lecturer. He became President of that society for the State of Washington, but he has now suddenly collapsed. Charges of infamous conduct were brought against him, and he was summoned to appear before his co laborers in Methodist mission work in Seattle for having criminally assaulted a girl of fifteen years of age. He took to flight before the trial came on and he is now in hiding.

The A. P. A. record of the United States appears to be even worse than that of its affiliated Canadian branch. It is no wonder that it is in a disintegrated condition owing to its inherent corruption and rottenness.

REV. D. M. MOODY AND THE SEMINARIES.

A son of the well known evangelist Mr. D. L. Moody has expressed his desire to study for ordination to the Protestant ministry, and his father has approved of his son's intention, but a curious difficulty has arisen which seems likely to prove an obstacle to the carrying out of the young man's desire.

Mr. Moody has declared that he does not know of any Protestant seminary in which the Christian faith of his son would be secure. So much rationalism has found its way into these seminaries under the name of "Higher Criticism" that the result is that the students come forth from them having lost all faith in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and he fears that, notwithstanding his son's present earnestness in religion, his faith would be sapped if he were to take the usual seminarians' course. Hence it is not likely that the young man will be admitted to ordination in any denomination, as the seminary course is regarded as a necessary preliminary to this.

It has been long known that in Germany nearly all the seminaries have lapsed into Rationalism, which is a mild name for downright Infidelity. It has also been known that several seminaries of America, such as the Union Theological of New York, and Lane Seminary, of Cincinnati, are decidedly Rationalistic, but it was not generally supposed that all these institutions are so tainted as Mr. Moody believes to be the case, but we may reasonably suppose that he has correct information on the subject. If this be the case Protestantism must be nearer to its end than we have imagined. If infidelity has thus taken possession of the seminaries there will scarcely be any Christianity taught to the rising generation except by the Catholic Church, and perhaps to

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