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tion of a wound which is expected to prove fatal.

It is now said that these results have caused a reaction against duelling in the popular mind. It is to be hoped that this is the case, though some are apt to exclaim that it is the one good feature of the practice of duelling that when it does prove fatal the number of fools in the country is diminished. But we cannot regard the matter thus flippantly, because duelling is always a crime against both God and man, and is therefore never a trivial matter or a subject for jesting. Even when these duels do not result in the actual shedding of blood, the principals go to the field of conflict with murder in their hearts, and the seconds co-operate in this murderous design. The sin is therefore scarcely, if any, the less, because the purpose in view is not attained.

It will be agreeable news to all true Catholics to hear that leading French Catholics have formed an anti duelling league, at the head of which are General de la Roque, the Prince de Beaulieu, and the Prince de Bourges, whose influence, in military circles especially, toward putting an end to the infamous practice, will be great, as it is chiefly in those circles that the custom is kept up.

There have always been men in the higher ranks of life in France, and among the officers of the army, who have had the courage to maintain openly that the man who refuses to fight is more truly courageous than he who gives or accepts a challenge, but hitherto but little attention has been paid to their contention. The new league will, however, circulate healthy literature showing the sinfulness and dishonor of the practice, and it is reasonable to expect that it will gradually bring about a much to be desired change of sentiment. It will also advocate the establishment of Courts of Honor which will decide when any real injury is done by persons of rank to others in similar position, and what reparation should be made.

RACE DISTINCTIONS IN RELIGION.

A St. Louis daily paper has recently published a portrait, with a short biography, of a negro of that city whose claim to fame was that (it was said) he was the only negro member of a white congregation in that city. He belongs to a Methodist church, and the fact is that Methodists, equally with the other Protestant Churches in the South, will not admit colored people to membership in their churches; but owing to special circumstances the negro in question became a member of this one, and the congregation has not yet had the hardihood to expel him from the sacred precincts of the Ark outside of which salvation cannot be had, or is at least difficult to be attained, and so he remains.

If it had been said that the negro in question was the only member of a white Protestant congregation, we understand that the statement would have been true; but there are many negroes who are members of the Catholic Church, not only in St. Louis, but in all the cities and towns, whether in the North or South. The Church Progress of St. Louis, speaking from personal knowledge, states that they are to be found in many of the St. Louis Catholic churches, and they may be seen at Mass on any Sunday at "St. Alphonsus," St. Xaviers, the new Cathedral and St. Ann's Churches. "In fact," the Progress adds,

"A great many of the Catholic churches in this city have colored members; but we name only the above ones because we have positive knowledge that they substantiate our statement."

The Catholic Church is the only one in the South which makes no distinction between white and colored members of its congregations, and every Sunday, as well as during the week, colored Catholics may be seen assisting at Mass, and receiving the sacraments of holy Communion, etc., just as the white members of these congregations.

St. Paul said:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel. For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek; and to the Greeks and the barbarians, to the wise and to the unwise, I am a debtor." (Rom. i. 14, 16.)

And again:

"For there is no distinction of the Jew and the Greek; for the same is Lord over all, rich to all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." (Rom. x. 12, 13.)

It is a puzzle to conceive how those who have undertaken to reform the Church of Christ can justify themselves for having created a distinction of race, where the word of God declares there should be none. By making such distinctions, the sects proclaim themselves to be mere local organizations, and not the true Catholic Church

of Christ into which should be gathered all the nations of the earth.

THE PAPAL CONSISTORY.

At the Consistory held by the Holy Father on April 15th Archbishop Martinelli, the Papal Delegate to the United States, was preconized a Cardinal, as it has been long expected would be the case.

His Eminence the new Cardinal has well merited this distinction, as he has gained universal esteem by the able and dignified manner in which he has fulfilled the onerous duties devolving upon him in his position as representative of the Holy See. Eleven other Cardinals were preconized at the same Consistory.

In his allocution addressed to the assembled Cardinals, the Holy Father referred mournfully to the numerous attacks which have recently been made on religion in several European countries. States widely separated from each other, and having very different interests and motives of action, have nevertheless strong factions within them whose one object is to destroy the religious orders of the Catholic Church, and to effect their purpose they do not hesitate to set aside the laws by which the rights of property are safeguarded, and to violate the sacred principles of equity. It is also the object of these factions to destroy the good work done by the religious congregations in the education of youth.

The present rulers, not only of Italy and France, but now also of Portugal, are of one accord in this, and the war first inaugurated in Italy against the religious orders is being carried on now with the same bitterness in France and Portugal. In Spain, also, there is a party which is working to carry out a similar design, though in the last named country the Government appears to be still animated by a religious spirit, and has not yielded to the outcry of the irreligious factionists. There is some hope yet that their purpose will be defeated in France, for the people there are awaking from their apathy, and may yet foil the efforts of M. Waldeck Rousseau to suppress the religious communities.

The Holy Father also spoke feelingly of the shameful manner in which he has been, and is still being, treated by the Italian Government, and said, in reference to the divorce bill which a Socialist member has introduced into the Italian Chamber of Deputies:

"To the ancient, insult levelled at the Church, it is desired to add another, profaning the sanctity of Christian marriage, and destroying the basis of domestic society."

He also urged Christian society to have recourse to the light which God will send, in response to earnest prayer, for guidance in the future.

THE MAFIA AND THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT.

Sicily, which has been the headquarters of the notorious Anarchistic Association known as the Mafia, has again become the scene of new and frightful disorders caused by this society. The order was given by the Italian Government early in January that this and similar societies should be suppressed at all costs, and the local authorities were informed that if they neglected their duty in this regard they would be punished with degradation from their offices and other penalties suited to the enormity of their offences.

For a while the authorities exercised some vigilance, and through information received, presumably from members of the societies in question in hope of rewards, they were enabled to make a number of arrests, some of which were of considerable importance. Other officials, who were in league with the miscreants, were able on their part to convey information to the Mafia of the charges against them and of the sources from which the damning evidence was obtained.

By such means, and through their own spies, the Mafia were put on their guard and were enabled to conceal themselves. Now, however, they have boldly accepted the challenge thrown to them by the Government, and a carnival of crime in the way of reprisals is dominant all over the island. It is stated that they have murdered fifteen men since the beginning of February, in Sicily, and have left between the teeth of each murdered man a paper with the words: "Thus the Mafia punishes its traitorous members." The victims were suspected of having given information to the police, criminating leading spirits in the society, and this method of terrorizing the informants, and at the same time of hurling defiance at the Government, has been adopted.

The number of murders committed

by this society since it has been known to have existed is enormous, and to it are traceable nearly all the murders of monarchs and nobles which have horrified the world during the last few years.

It is incomprehensible what inducements the Mafia have to perpetrate these crimes, but facts are to be accepted as they stand, and the eyes of the world cannot be shut to the fact that the Mafia are the most blood-thirsty criminals who have been known to exist, since the suppression of Thugdom in India. It is to be hoped that the Government of Italy will adopt effective measures for their suppression. But neither can we ignore the fact that it is the war which the Italian Government has waged upon religion and religious education which is responsible for the existence of these societies which the Government now finds it necessary to suppress. If the Government had not educated the children in godless schools, there would not be nearly so many godless people in the country now.

The Government must have found out before now the origin of the evil; but it is extremely chary of applying the only true remedy to meet the case, because they fear that they would thus strengthen the hands of good Catholics who persist in demanding the restoration of the Pope's temporal power. But it must come to this at last, or the country will fall entirely in the abyss of anarchy and confusion.

THE SACREDNESS OF MARRIAGE IN NEW ENGLAND AND CANADA.

The question of the population of the New England States has been recently once more under discussion in the columns of the Boston Transcript.

A Protestant minister, by name the Rev. W. G. Pufferfoot, created a lively sensation by giving birth statistics of these old Puritan States, from which he drew the alarming inference that the old Puritan population is passing away and being replaced by new population of foreign origin, chiefly Irish and Catholic.

The Transcript disputed these statements, bringing forward figures to show that the birth rate of these States is not falling to a low ebb. To this Mr. Pufferfoot made reply that:

"There is no use in trying to find fault with my figures. I am not a false prophet. For whatever reason, it is true that very few of our modern families have such households as our fathers and mothers had. I am not judging the motives of people who do not have children. I am merely stating the fact, and I cannot but feel that it is a very grave situation. I am not alone. Letters are now coming thanking me for what I said."

In another part of his letter he says:

"I did not speak of a lamentable falling off of children in New England, but a lamentable falling off of children in New England families. I have made the statement in order to show that the houses have as many children to day as ever, but of a different race."

He tells us, further, that the falling off of genuine American families is a serious matter, especially as they are in the divorce courts:

"You don't find the foreigner breaking the marriage tie. To such an extent has the divorce business grown that it is doubtful whether Mormonism can show such a plurality of wives and husbands as one can find among the Gentiles."

No criticism is so pungent as that which is truthful, and it is because the Rev. Mr. Pufferfoot's statements hit the mark that they strike so hard. During the year 1899 no fewer than 3,279 divorces were granted in the State of Ohio out of 4,470 decrees asked for, and there were pending in the courts at the close of the year 2,961 cases. The divorces actually granted do not represent the entire evil of divorce, for even when the decree is not granted the fact that it has been asked for shows that the family has been already broken up by the expectation of a divorce. From these figures, an Ohio paper, the Sandusky Register, drew the inference that at least 50,000 divorces had been granted in the United States, and according to Rev. Mr. Pufferfoot, who undoubtedly here tells the truth, these were almost exclusively among the Protestant American population. Among the same population also prevails the desire of not having large families, and to put this into effect abominable practices are resorted to. These facts led Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton to predict many years ago that if the descendants of the New England Puritans continued to set at naught the edict of the Almighty in regard to the obligations of the married state, "the descendants of the Celt will trample on the graves of the Puritans."

Here we may make the application of these remarks to the case which in this country has been recently attracting so much attention, and excited so many adverse comments on the part of the non Catholic press and the sectar-

ian Synods and Conferences. We refer to the Deloit case. The laws of marriage as laid down by the Catholic Church have been enacted for the purpose of preserving the sanctity of the married state, and even the law of clandestinity which prevailed in causing the Deloit marriage to be declared null and void in the sight of God and of the Catholic Church, is a safeguard against laxity in contracting marriages, and against hurried marriages in which no attention is paid to existing impediments, such as that the parties are already married, or that they are within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity or affinity. It is thus a safeguard against bigamy and polygamy, as well as a security that the marriage itself shall be regarded as a sacred rite authorized by God, instead of a mere animal act authorized by the state.

THE METHODIST CONFERENCE AND CHURCH AUTHORITY.

The Methodist Conferences of the Dominion are greatly agitated over the trial of the Rev. W. W. Baer, a clergyman of British Columbia, who was charged by Mr. Justice Williams with the crime of smoking, which is said to be strictly prohibited to ministers by the Discipline.

Rev. Mr. Baer pleaded before the British Columbia Conference that he was obliged to use tobacco for smoking owing to insomnia, and the Chairman ruled out the complaint, rather owing to some doubt regarding the wording of the Book of Discipline, than to the plea of the accused.

The case was appealed to the Church Court of Appeal, and judgment passed on the appeal on April 13 in Toronto. The case has not been finally settled, but was referred back to the British Columbia Conference for trial, as the President is said to have exceeded his powers in dismissing the cause so summarily. The Court of Appeal does not express an opinion whether or not Mr. Baer had justification for his practice of smoking, though the decision of the local President of Conference has been set aside. The local Conference will, therefore, have this point to settle.

A voluntary association has undoubtedly the right as a human institution to insist upon the observance of certain rules by its members and officers; but we cannot conceive of the Church of Christ as a merely voluntary organization. It was instituted by Christ for a certain purpose, and the public generally are commanded, not recommended, to hear the Church under penalty of being regarded as the heathen and the publican.

We admit also that the Church must have authority to direct its members, whether lay or clerical, to observe its rules of conduct, which are imposed with a view to the salvation of souls, which is the purpose of the Church's institution. But not even Protestants of any denomination will deny that there was a Church, and that the Church of Christ, when Methodism or Protestantism in any form began, and if any Church has the authority to make laws now, the Church of Christ had that authority at the period referred to. Yet Methodism and all Protestantism refused to obey then, on the plea that the Church could not override the individual conscience. If this plea were a valid one, the conscience of Rev. Mr. Baer ought not to be overridden now by the laws made by either the local or the general Methodist Conference. This reason is the more strong as the Church which claims the authority to discipline Mr. Baer is founded upon disobedience to Church authority. Further: If the authority of the Catholic Church were a usurpation when Methodism was started, as Methodists and others assert, for a much greater reason the authority to judge now claimed by Conference is a usurpation without foundation either in Scripture or tradition.

REJECTED FOR CONSCIENCE SAKE.

Just before Henry Austin Adams left the ministry of the Episcopal Church, an ardent admirer, believing that a man of his splendid oratorical ability should not be confined within the boundary of a little parish, set aside the sum of \$100,000, the interest on which was to enable him to travel about the country, and, from platform and pulpit, to proclaim the truths of Christianity. This was a tempting offer to the premier orator of the Episcopal Church; but Mr. Adams could not but be faithful to his conscience and this was leading him into the Catholic fold. When the decisive moment arrived, Henry Austin Adams preferred the Catholic Church, with its poverty and hardship that must accompany such a step, to the tempting endowment and the plentiful honors of his former career. If only that former endowment were at the disposal of Henry Austin Adams, the Catholic!

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EASTER IN ROME.

The Protestant writer, William W. Story, thus presents an admirable description of the glorious festival in the Eternal City:

"Easter has come," says he. "You may know it by the ringing of the bells, the sound of the trumpets in the streets and the firing of guns. By 12 o'clock Mass in St. Peter's is over and the piazza is crowded with people to see the benediction; and a grand, imposing spectacle it is."

"Over the great balcony stretches a white awning, where Cardinals, Bishops and attendants are collected and where the Pope will soon be seen. Below the piazza is alive with moving masses. In the centre is drawn up long lines of soldiery with yellow and red pompons and glittering helmets and bayonets. They are surrounded by crowds on foot, and at the outdoor rim are packed carriages."

"What a sight it is! Above us the great dome of St. Peter's, and below the grand entrancing colonnade and the vast space, in the centre of which rises the solemn obelisk, thronged with the masses of living beings. At last the clock strikes. In the far balcony, beneath the projecting awning, that casts a patch of soft, transparent shadow along the golden sunlit facade, and surrounded by a group of brilliant figures, are seen two huge fans of showy peacock plumes, and between them a figure clad in white robes from a golden chair and spreads his great sleeves like wings as he raises his arms in benediction."

"That is the Pope. All is dead silence, and a musical voice, sweet and penetrating, is heard chanting from the balcony. The people bend and kneel; with a cold, gray flash the forest of bayonets gleam as the soldiery drop to their knees and rise to salute as the voice dies away."

"Then the Pope again rises, again gives his benediction, waving to and fro his right hand—three fingers open, thumb, first and second fingers open—and making the Sign of the Cross, retreats between the peacock feathers and attendants, is borne away, and the season of Lent is over."

The most awe-inspiring of all the Easter ceremonies is certainly this solemn benediction given "Urbi et Orbi"—to Rome and the World—"by the Sovereign Pontiff. Borne into this great gallery over the portico of St. Peter's, the Pope stands at a stupendous height above the watching multitude that swarm in the court below, his robes radiant with gems and heavy with gold, his tiara sparkling with diamonds, the mitred prelates attending him likewise invested."

A silence as of death is spread over the vast, majestic place, as Christ's Vicar enunciates the words of blessing. As there is no temple in the world equal to St. Peter's, there is no ceremony in the world so impressive as this.

"Who shall picture," says William E. Channing, "the splendors of a beautiful Easter Sunday at St. Peter's? Who can imagine the overpowering feelings of the pious in the Pontifical chair, followed by the most sacred bodies of the Church, and the centre of admirably knelt upon the pavement and murmured my prayer; as he blessed the prostrate multitudes from the exterior I offered up to Heaven my ardent gratitude for being permitted to take part."

THE "MISERERE" IN ST. PETER'S.