

## WRETCHED LOOSENESS OF THE ONTARIO MARRIAGE LAW.

In his last pastoral address the Bishop of Niagara calls attention to the reckless legislation that has opened the door so wide to the practice of fraud and deception in the most sacred of all ties,

## THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY.

"I deem it my duty to urge publicly upon my brethren in the ministry the grave and responsible nature of their act before God and His Church in solemnizing each and every marriage."

"The laws of the land define the conditions under which the civil contract of marriage may be made. These conditions do not fully coincide with those under which the Church amongst us will countenance marriage, and by prayer and benediction invoke God's blessing on the union of man and wife. The degrees within which marriage may be contracted, and the provisions for securing publicity laid down by the civil authorities in this Province, are so exceedingly lax that little or no protection is afforded to society."

"The law of this Province allows marriage to be contracted after the banns have been published once, and that either before, or during, or after service. The law of our Church requires that the banns must be published in the Church on three several Sundays, during the time of morning service, or of evening service if there be no morning service; the aim being to secure the most extended publicity through the presence of the largest congregation. Notwithstanding this publicity, the case has actually occurred of a man being married by one of our clergy to a woman in this city in which his lawful wife was residing at the time. How frequent must such cases be where one publication of banns either before, or during, or after service is regarded as sufficient."

"Because two persons may have possessed themselves of a marriage license it does not follow that they ought to be married, nor does that license impose any obligation on our clergy to marry them, nor does it relieve our clergy of all responsibility."

"The blessing which we invoke and bestow on every marriage is not ours, it is God's. Surely we clergy are bound to make as sure as we can that the union is such a one as God would bless—that it is in accordance with His Holy will and laws."

The Bishop also points out that the church is the proper place for marriages, and that deacons should not undertake to use the marriage service, as it implies the presence and act of a priest.

## REVIEWS.

THE MADONNA CALENDAR. New York: Thomas Wittaker. Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison. This Calendar is a perfect gem.

THE BABY'S STOCKING. By Mrs. George A. Paul. New York: Thomas Wittaker. Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison.

This poem is so suitable and appropriate for this season of the year that we take the liberty of publishing it in our columns.

CHRISTMAS BOOKS, BOOKLETS AND CARDS. Fleming H. Revell Company, Toronto.

This company having recently purchased the Willard Tract Depository, Yonge street, Toronto, have in stock a full line of Prayer Books, Hymnal Companions, Hymns A. and M., etc. The Christmas gift books shown this year by the company contain short, interesting stories, with beautiful illustrations. The Christmas cards and mottoes for the New Year they have in great variety and are remarkably cheap.

THE REVELATION AND THE RECORDS.—By Dr. James Macgregor, Edinburgh. T. & T. Clark, 1898. Price 7s. 6d.

So many books on the contents and authority of the Scriptures have, of recent times, been tainted with the "Higher Criticism," that it may be a relief to our readers to hear of one that stands upon the old ways. This is emphatically the case with the present volume; which deals (1) with the reality of supernatural revelation, and (2) with the contents and character of the record in which that

revelation is enshrined. We are not quite sure that we can go the whole way with Dr. Macgregor in regard to his theory of Inspiration, but we entirely sympathize with his aim, and generally with his method. The portions on the Canon are excellent. They are condensed without being inadequate, and the whole is pleasant and stimulating reading.

ELEMENTARY COURSE OF CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. New York: P. E. Shea, 1898.

This is a very admirable and comprehensive volume, prepared for the use of Roman Catholic seminaries by Brother Louis, of Poissy, and translated from the French by the Brothers of the Christian Schools of New York. It is surprising to note the amount of material which they got into these 538 pages. There is hardly a subject connected with logic, philosophy, metaphysics, psychology, ethics, which does not here receive a treatment which, within the necessary limits, may be called adequate. The terminology is mainly scholastic, and sometimes it is minute beyond modern requirements; but it is always clear and intelligible to any one who will take pains and grapple with it. For theological seminaries and even for pass students in the universities, a manual like this may be safely recommended. A page or two removed would take away all that Anglicans could take exception to.

MAGAZINES.—We can speak most favourably of two magazines which have now become firmly established in the regard of all students of the Bible and of theology. The *Critical Review* now completes its fourth year, and fills its place admirably as a critic of the best theological and philosophical literature. We wonder how we got on without it. Any one who diligently reads this review will know what is best in contemporary thought. The *Expository Times* is no less excellent in the practical sphere. The editor's "Notes" are admirable. Prebendary Whiteford writes interestingly on the "Pilgrim's Progress." We have a continuation of Dr. Wendt's papers on the "Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus," of Dr. Rothe's exposition of 1 John—with many other useful papers. The *Expository Times* for December is first rate. We do not, of course, give an imprimatur to the theology of every article; but every page is worth reading. We may mention, in particular, Christian Islam, W. Berkley on the late Professor Jowett, Dr. Wendt on the Kingdom of God, Miss Woods on Tennyson's "In Memoriam," and Rothe's Exposition of the first Epistle of St. John.

## THE GIFT OF HOLY ORDERS.

A SERMON PREACHED IN ST. MARK'S CHURCH, HALIFAX, N. S., NOV. 5TH, 1898, BY F. W. VROOM, B. D., PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY AT KING'S COLLEGE, WINDSOR, N. S.

"The gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands."—2 Tim. i. 6.

The intention of the framers of our Ordinal in placing the sermon at the beginning was evidently that the congregation might first be instructed as to the nature and solemnity of the service about to take place, so that they might be better able to appreciate it and take their part in it.

It would seem at first sight hardly requisite that the people should be reminded at every ordination, whether priests or deacons, how necessary these offices are; but upon consideration we shall find the direction is a wise one.

If the three-fold ministry is, as the late Bishop Lightfoot emphatically declared it to be, the very "back-bone of the Church," how important a thing it is that they who have been brought into the fellowship of the Church, should have a clear idea of the nature and functions of the "divers Orders" which God of His Divine Providence has appointed in His Church, and which, as the preface to the Ordinal says, "it is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scriptures and Ancient Authors," have been from the Apostles' time.

It is a matter of little moment that we do not find in the New Testament the titles bishop, priest, and deacon, as they are used in the Prayer Book, to designate the three orders of the ministry. What is of much greater moment is that we do find a three-fold ministry. The Apostle Paul—apparently himself exercising what we should call episcopal jurisdiction—sends greeting to the two lower orders of bishops and deacons at Philippi. Timothy and Titus, to whom the oversight of the Churches of

Ephesus and Crete respectively was committed, are instructed and advised by the aged Apostle who has had long experience of the same office, how they are to exercise their authority and responsibility in the government of the Church and especially in ordaining fit men to the offices of bishop or presbyter and deacon.

There are here then three distinct grades or orders of the ministry, differing in name only from those which we have to-day. The successors of the Apostles left the title of "Apostle" to those who had been immediately appointed to the office by Christ Himself, and chose rather to be called "bishops" or "overseers," a term which the second order of ministers had formerly in common with them, as is plainly seen by St. Paul's addressing the Ephesian presbyters at Miletus as "bishops." In and after the times of the Apostles no church was considered duly organized which did not possess these three orders of the ministry, and indeed for 1,500 years no attempt was made to set up any other polity.

It is with the second order—the *presbyterate* or *priesthood*—that we are chiefly concerned to-day. The deacon is merely an assistant. He has no independent authority. The Bishop merely has added to the powers and prerogatives of the priesthood jurisdiction and the power of ordination and confirmation. The title of *presbyter* or *elder*, which is applied to the second order in the New Testament, and which St. Peter takes to himself—"The elders which are among you I exhort who am also an elder"—implies dignity and honour. The word "priest" is not used of the Christian ministry in the New Testament, possibly because the Jewish priesthood was still existing; but, as Hooker observes: "The fathers of the Church of Christ . . . call usually the ministry of the Gospel *priesthood* in regard of that which the Gospel hath proportionable to ancient sacrifices, namely the Communion of the Blessed Body and Blood of Christ." And he adds, "let them use what dialect they will, whether we call it a priesthood, a presbytership, or a ministry, it skilleth not." But our English Reformers deliberately retained the shorter word, and the two titles of priest and presbyter have continued to be used as interchangeable, not only amongst ourselves but in the Roman Church as well. The office is the same whether we call it by the Prayer Book name or any other. It is what is meant by the general term "ministry" in the New Testament—the office which gives power and authority to minister the Word and Sacraments, and which has been retained and exercised by the Church in all parts of the world ever since the Apostles' days.

It is for the purpose of admitting to this holy ministry one who is known to have used the office of a deacon well, that this ordination is held to-day.

But perhaps some will say, "what is the need of it at all? Are we not all of us priests—a royal priesthood—and what call is there then for a special order of priests?" Let me point out to you in the first place that this was exactly the plea of Korah and his company when they rebelled against Aaron and his sons—"Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them." It had been declared in Exodus "Ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, an holy nation"—the same words almost which St. Peter applies to Christians—but if these words were not meant to interfere with the functions of the Levitical ministry in the former case—as certainly they were not—neither do they interfere in the latter case with the functions of the Christian ministry. The true explanation is that neither under the Mosaic nor the Christian dispensation were the ministers intended to be "a caste separate from the laity," but only the authorized organs and representatives of the laity.

This may be seen by St. Paul's language where he refers to Christians as one body, in which all the members are interdependent upon each other. The priesthood, with its powers and principles, pertains to the whole body; but finds its expression through the proper organs. In the natural body no one member can say to another, however different its functions, "I have no need of thee." The eye sees, the tongue speaks, the heart causes the blood to circulate; yet these organs can only work, each in its proper place, as members of the body. So is the ministry to be regarded as the organ by which the Church's priesthood is exercised. A clear understanding of this truth would save us from much of the extravagant and unpleasant language which is made use of at the present day with regard to what are called "sacerdotal pretensions." The idea against which men inveigh so strongly, of the priesthood coming between the people and God, to offer sacrifice or worship in their place, is a gross misconception, and only a person who was very ignorant of the principles of the English Church could for a moment entertain it. Such a distorted conception of the priestly office may have been, and no doubt was, common enough in the Middle Ages, when it was to the advantage of the "massing-priests" to make people believe that they alone had the pre-