

ditions, since from their nature such obligations exist, are either in accord with each other or in conflict. What is then the duty of the Catholic citizen, that is to say, of him who is at once a member of civil and of religious society? If the two societies are in accord, if their obligations exist together without conflicting, the duty of the Catholic citizen is easy of performance; he has only to conform to the obligations of the two societies of which he is a member. But if these are in conflict, if one cannot strive for its object, at least in its own opinion, without interfering with the other; if the Catholic citizen, in a word, is brought face to face with contending obligations, what line of conduct should he adopt, the choice to be made being decided by the motive? This is what we have to define: Religious society, the Church; and civil society, the State; are, as compared with each other, two unequal societies, but composed, as in the present case, of the same members. They are two unequal societies, because their objects are unequal. There can indeed be no equality between eternal welfare, the object of the Church; and temporal welfare, the object of the State. If the objects are not equal, it follows, as a matter of course, that one must be superior to the other, otherwise they would not be unequal. Is it necessary for me to prove that eternal welfare is superior to temporal welfare? No, that is an admitted truth, evident to all the world. Therefore, the object of the Church is superior to that of the State. Again, it is admitted, and it is the principle which serves as the basis of our argument, and which was cited at its commencement, it is admitted without question that in society all power must be proportionate to the object. Therefore, the power of the Church, a society superior to civil society, because its object is superior to that of the State, is itself superior to that of the State. In view of contradictory obligations imposed, the one by religious power and the other by civil power, the Catholic citizen is therefore bound to obey the Church in preference to the State. But the duty of obeying is correlative with the right to command, that is to say that it is the duty of the citizen to obey, because it is the right of the State to exact that obedience. But, if, in view of contra-

dictory obligations emanating, the one from the State, and the other from the Church, the Catholic citizen is only found to submit to the latter, he therefore does not and cannot owe obedience to the State. Therefore the State has not the right to exact such obedience—judicial power. If the State has not the power to exact such obedience, it follows that it does not possess that of compelling by force the citizen whose duty does not bind him to obey—coercive power. Further, if the State has not the right to exact or to compel, it cannot have that of proposing, in an obligatory form, what cannot be an obligation to a Catholic citizen—legislative power. The State has therefore no power to impose on Catholic citizens obligations which contravene the rights of the Church. The legislator—and we are here as legislators—has not therefore the power of legislating in a manner opposed to the rights of the Church. Such are the true principles which must guide us, and make us Catholics accept the teachings of the Church. Now, what are those teachings at least so far as relates to the question of marriage. Before replying, it is important to establish at once what are the rights of the Church in this important matter. The forbearance of the House will allow of my approaching this question. In the abstract, marriage is a natural, civil and ecclesiastical contract. It is a natural contract instituted by God himself amid the magnificence of the terrestrial paradise and the unity and indissolubility of which receive a sanction and authority which is no less than Divine in character from the words of Genesis:

*"Erat duo in carne una;*

*Quod Deus conjunxit homo non separet."*

Marriage is also a civil contract, but in this sense only, that it is a contract subject to certain civil formalities, apart from which the marriage may be looked upon as void as respects the civil results which may follow it. Thirdly, marriage is an ecclesiastical contract, and as such subject to the canons of the Church. By this it is not to be supposed that marriage is a triple contract. Not so, it is a single contract which takes these several names according as it is looked at, as relating to the propagation of the human race or as a matter of interest either to civil society or