

was interested in the building that had been planned—he believed in promoting such work, but he confessed, the inclusion of his name had puzzled him—annoyed him a bit at first. He laughed as he explained that he did not know whether his resentment was for his father's sake who would have been greatly displeased at the classification, or for his mother's sake, who would have been grieved that his name did not belong there.

"You see, Mr. Kenyon, my mother was a Catholic. No, no, as he saw the question in the other man's eyes, 'I didn't give up my religion. I never had any. I never was baptized, and—'

"I doubt that," said Mr. Kenyon earnestly.

"You doubt?"

"I doubt that you were never baptized."

"Why, my father would not permit it," persisted Howard.

"The other slowly shook his head. 'He could not prevent it, Mr. Howard. A Catholic mother, no matter what the consequence to herself—if she is a real Catholic mother—always has her children baptized. So if your mother was a Catholic, Mr. Howard there is also a certainty that you have been baptized.'

"I can hardly believe that," said the other, hesitatingly. "And as there isn't any way now of—"

"It would be easy enough to find out," interrupted Kenyon. "If you write to the pastor of the church in the parish where you lived in your infancy, the record will undoubtedly be there."

"I had not thought of that. In fact, I have never thought of my mother's religion, one way or another—probably never would have thought of it but for your call here yesterday. I think I'll write that letter. Not that I will make any difference now, but just out of curiosity. I won't delay you any longer, now, but I hope you will accept this little addition to your fund," as he offered a liberal donation.

"I suppose you are on your way to church, and I hope I have not made you late."

"That's where I am going," replied Kenyon, "and I have just about time enough to get there. I'd be glad if you would let me know the result of your correspondence, if you write that letter."

"Yes," laughed Howard, as he turned towards the house, "I'll let you know as soon as I have any definite information, but I think it will prove your theory wrong."

The baptismal records in the little church from which his mother had been buried gave indisputable evidence that Peter Howard had been baptized in his early infancy.

The knowledge carried with it a burden of sorrow. His father had always spoken of Peter's mother with a depth of affection and reverence that had seemed strangely out of keeping with the occasional remarks he had made in regard to the practice of her religion. Had he in those later years realized his mistake?

And now it seemed, with the priest's letter in his hand, as if across the years, his mother was telling what she had done for him in secret and at the risk of much unhappiness. He did not know, even now, that he wanted this gift that his mother had tried so hard to secure for him. Yet she must have thought it worth while; and surely the least he could do for her sake would be thoroughly to investigate the claims of that faith to which decades earlier she had pledged him.

He discussed the subject with Mr. Kenyon, and asked him to introduce him to his pastor, although, and he smiled quizzically as he added:

"He or his workers have already included me among his parishioners. I cannot yet say that I shall become a Catholic. I am looking for information and instruction and my mind is open to conviction. But stranger things have happened, so probably I did belong on your list, and as I had already been baptized, it looks as if the one who made that significant mistake on the list did not take such a chance, after all."

—S. Waldron Carney in the Magnificat.

**THE DANGER OF EASY DIVORCE**

Anthony M. Benedick, D. D., in America

The marital bond is still very much minus the stability and firmness which were an integral part of its original constitution. There is, when all is said and done, only one efficient cure for the disintegration of family life which easy divorce is causing in our land, and that is insistence upon the clause in the marriage vow, "until death do us part." Uniform marriage and divorce laws may alleviate the situation temporarily, until the sagacity engendered by passion devises new ways of outwitting the law, but only a return to the sacramental concept of marriage, as a permanent union between one man and one woman to the end that they may better serve God, will save the family and, through it, the State.

A twenty-one-year-old girl in Nebraska has been divorced three times and has two pleas pending—her third marriage is quite obscure in her recollection; "I know there was a third marriage," she says "but I've forgotten his name. I have a hazy recollection of a divorce from him, but I can't recollect for sure." We have a law, I believe, to jog along lazy memories of that kind. The ninth husband of an

"Further expansion in the production figures of the divorce mill is hopefully foreseen after the usual marital flurry occasioned by leap year." The State of Yucatan, in Mexico, bids for recognition by offering to divorce foreigners after they have acquired thirty days' residence there, the price being fifteen dollars to the parties to the divorce are "mutually agreeable," and one hundred and twenty-five dollars if the plea is contested.

An ounce of ridicule weighs more than a pound of reason; Miss Thyra W. Amos, dean of women at the University of Pittsburgh, says that, were she wealthy, her first act would be to donate \$10,000 toward the establishment of a fund to suppress the publication of alleged jokes based on womanhood, marriage, and the sacred relations of life. The light estimate held by men in public repute of the sanctity of the marriage vow must have and is having its effect upon the public mind and public morals.

Ibanez, whose claim to be an expounder of moral causes may well be contested by orthodox minds is of the opinion that easy divorce is desirable, as being in line with all the modern conceptions of freedom, and as the best means of quieting the present marital unrest. Woman, he admits, is generally opposed to divorce, but "perhaps she does not realize how much it may help her. She is conservative. She holds tight to the old customs. It is against woman that divorce must struggle if it is to make headway and establish a higher freedom."

The committee on family religion of the Southern Presbyterian Church has lately come to the conclusion that "one of the fruitful causes of divorce is hasty marriage." True enough; but, let it be remembered again that the possibility of divorce, of the total severance of the marriage tie, is the greatest incentive to hasty, unconsidered marriages. If marriage were regarded more in the nature of a binding contract than as an easily interrupted experiment, much more and much saner thought would be expended in its consummation. The Church is a friend of true liberty, as is evident from the fact that she demands voluntary, unforced consent as an essential condition of a valid marriage, but she is ever opposed to license, which perhaps the popular Spanish novelist mistakes for its legitimate brother?

The only too popular conception of the meaning of conjugal union was lately given expression by the newly-divorced second spouse of the erstwhile American dancing goddess and film star, who has, since Paris severed her shackles, again entered the state of connubial so-called bondage. The ex-husband, asked for his reaction to the divorce, said resignedly: "Well, what can a man do when his wife is determined to divorce him, except to give in gracefully? I can only thank her for a good time."

There is the fault in modern marriage, that is the cause of our present-day marriage and divorce problem, as it is at the root of many other evils which are gnawing at the vitals of our civilization. The highest ideal upon which too many minds are set is the desire of a good time; trials and troubles are to be avoided as deadly poison; we have forgotten the example of patience and long-suffering which the Man of Nazareth set centuries ago for the guidance of mankind, we have forgotten that this world in which we live is a vale of tears, and we would have tried to make it a paradise of, particularly, sensual delights. The easiest way of getting over a rough place in the road is to turn back and take another way; what matters it if it carries us to a different destination?

Congeniality of interest, similarity in temperament is a great aid towards a happy marriage, but where that union of sympathy is naturally lacking, it can be born of an early marriage. Ibanez is of the opinion that there is more chance of success, if the couple wait until the husband is well established in his career, for then the home will rest on a firmer foundation. But, on the other hand, a husband and wife who have come together through all the trials of poverty and adversity which accompany the fight to gain position and fortune will be as blood-brothers who have faced together the dangers of tempest and fire and sword; there will be a tie between them that no human power can break. That ex-Governor of one of our commonwealths who separated from his wife because she "liked and adored civilization," while he was "a good deal of a barbarian, and liked the wild places of the earth," did not realize, doubtless, that he was guilty of moral cowardice in one of the highest issues that life can present to man. "I have yielded," he declares, "to my wife's desire to experiment in the direction of more free self-determination." But such an experiment can never be brought to fruition through the shirking of sacred responsibilities.

There is a social veneer which one sees much of these days, and people of all appearances are ladies and gentlemen. They have wealth, and through that wealth they have an entry into the society, which they have striven to gain; but one to the manner born can always detect the sham, for they lack the ease and poise which inborn courtesy possesses and gives.

Indian woman, recently divorced, plans to hold a party for six of her former husbands, the other two gentlemen being omitted from the celebration because they cannot be found. An Illinois woman, forty-three years of age, has spent all her life seeking the perfect man, and thinks she has at last found him in her fourteenth mate. The thirteen other men to whom she had given, or rather lent, her heart and hand were all divorced by her, one of them three times. She may well claim the record.

Some of the grounds on which divorces are obtained would be amusing were the evil not so acute. A New England woman, having secured her husband's place as driver of a grocery wagon, secured a legal separation from him, since he was no longer necessary to her scheme of things. In New York a quarrel over the respective ability of husband and wife at playing bridge caused a break which resulted in divorce. A Michigan gentleman, after his wife had insisted on moving three times within the first month of their married existence, decided that he needed a more stationary mate. A St. Louis lady wanted to divorce her husband because he went to church nearly every night and spent his spare time reading the Bible, but the judge deemed her reason insufficient. In New Jersey comes a different story; his wife, the man in the case said, had made his home unbearable by praying and singing hymns at night.

Baron Fersen, president of the "Lightbearers," an international scientific and educational organization, in a lecture on his system of harmony, which he calls "The Science of Being," declares that the day will come when people about to marry will "sense" each other by magnetic vibrations, and thus be able to determine whether or not they should go through with their project; if discord results from this "sensing," they will know that the marriage will be unsatisfactory. The truth of the matter is that there is a deeper sense required, a sense of one's duty, not only to fellowman, but also to the Law of God. The fundamental stability of marriage must be assured, otherwise we may as well be honest with ourselves and proclaim public and legal the promiscuity which is in fact becoming common practise.

**IS COURTESY A LOST ART?**

Courtesy is no more. It is a lost art, and it is a great loss to society. Europeans have often commented upon the ill manners of Americans, especially the younger generation, and those of us who were raised in an atmosphere where courtesy was natural to old and young, notice this lack of manners today, because of the great contrast.

There is no longer a respect shown age. Gray hair is no longer considered a badge of honor commanding respect, neither does the knowledge which experience has brought to age, receive consideration, or attention from modern youth. They are ever ready to dispute with rudeness, any statement made by older persons.

Several times lately it has been my misfortune to ride down town on the street cars about noon; and at those times the cars are crowded with students, boys and girls, who are going to the afternoon sessions. I have seen boys and girls, too, sixteen and seventeen and older, remain seated while gray-haired women and men stood in the crowded aisles and I have yet to see one of them rise to offer a seat to those standing. Indeed not they! Again I have noticed them sitting sideways on the long seats at the entrance of each vestibule, talking and laughing, when by sitting straight there would have been seats for one or two of those who were compelled to stand. They left the car at different points, some to walk, some to change cars and it was rush, push out, nearly knocking down those who were standing. I asked myself "Who is to blame for this flagrant breach of manners?" and the only answer I could find was the lack of home training.

If children are accustomed to seeing courtesy and good manners between parents, things would be different, and society would have a cleaner, finer tone.

We cannot have two sets of manners. We cannot be rude ourselves and permit our children to be rude and discourteous at home and then expect them to observe the proper rules when they go out. You can polish a shoe until it shines, but before long the old spots and roughness will begin to show through, the appearance is spoiled, and you find the polish but a sham.

Innate courtesy comes, too, from a kind heart which prompts one to do the kindest things the kindest way, and to have a thought for the comfort of others before self. Genuinely courteous persons are always at ease, no matter where or in what company they are, because it is natural to them.

There is a social veneer which one sees much of these days, and people of all appearances are ladies and gentlemen. They have wealth, and through that wealth they have an entry into the society, which they have striven to gain; but one to the manner born can always detect the sham, for they lack the ease and poise which inborn courtesy possesses and gives.

I have visited in humble homes, unpretentious exteriorly and interiorly, but there was an inbred touch of refinement, in the simple furnishings and a graciousness and courtesy which was natural to those who lived there. Again I have been in the homes of those who have become suddenly wealthy and are trying to climb the social ladder. They are anxious to do the right thing, so anxious indeed that it makes them ill at ease and their guests uncomfortable. A repose of manner, a gentle but sincere cordiality, makes an ideal hostess. Her poise and perfect courtesy, which remains calm and unruffled under all circumstances, makes every guest feel honored and at home.

We as a people are not polite and respectful as they were thirty years ago. Looking back, one can see the change each year, and we have certainly not improved. We have become so engrossed in money making that the finer things, the things which really beautify life, are submerged by the grosser.

I was reading the other day in a paper a tribute to a man to his father who had just celebrated his ninety-first birthday. After discussing at length the many wonderful things that his father taught him he said, "One thing I owe to him is the ability to understand that there are things which are worth more than money. He did not tell me this in so many words. He just lived it. I did not know then what I was learning. I wanted money or at least the things that money would buy." Parents may preach day after day to their little ones on the duties of life, but their words will be forgotten, whereas their daily life for good or evil, will leave an indelible mark. Acts and not words count.

It devolves upon parents to so conduct themselves at home, that their children when they come in contact with those who are rude and discourteous, will remember how they did at home, and they will seek only those who are polite and courteous naturally and through habit.—Mrs. Blake L. Woodson in The Echo.

**ESSENTIAL TO TRUE RELIGION**

Prayer is one of the greatest means given to man to assist in working out his salvation. Prayer is an act so essential to religion that it is a compendium of all others.

Prayer, whether it is vocal or meditative, is communion with God, is an enjoyable conversation with that all-powerful Being. In prayer, our minds cannot be held in bondage; the body cannot restrain the mind from leaving this vale of tears, soaring upwards, piercing the clouds, passing into heaven itself, where it stands before the throne of the Almighty. Verily, while in prayer our minds wander throughout "Father's mansions"; mentally, we live in heaven with the elect of God.

It is our constant duty to pray. We must pray, if not with the language of our lips, with the homage of our hearts. Without prayer how can we resist temptation? How can we bear our sufferings and crosses?

"Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation." Christ said, "Without Me you can do nothing."

It is not "The Lord is partly my portion," nor "The Lord is in my portion," but He Himself makes up the sum total of my soul's inheritance. Within the circumference of that circle lies all that we possess or desire.—Spurgeon.



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