

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

The following Letter has been addressed by the MARRIAGE LAW REFORM ASSOCIATION of London, England, to Catholic Members of Parliament :—

21, Parliament Street, London, S.W.

Feb. 15, 1866.

SIR.—The advocates for giving, in the United Kingdom, civil validity to marriage with the sister of a deceased wife, are desirous of bringing the subject distinctly under the notice of Catholics, with the view of obtaining their co-operation. They conceive that there exist no reasons why that co-operation should not be given, but many and powerful reasons why it should be accorded.

If, as is supposed, this is a mere question of policy or expediency, not involving any article of the Catholic faith, the way is open to lay before you such considerations as appear applicable to the case, in the hope that you may see it to be your duty to give your support to the Marriages Bill.

1. It is evident that the Catholic Church does not regard such marriages as opposed to any precept of the Divine law, or *contra bonos mores*. As a rule, in all Catholic countries, when a desire is expressed for such a marriage, a dispensation is readily granted. On a recent occasion, an Irish gentleman, in Dublin, well known and respected, went to Rome, received a special dispensation