

ed and has been circulated throughout Protestant homes in Ontario, arousing bitter prejudices among neighbors where harmony and friendship had before prevailed.

The object of the decree *Ne Temera* is to preserve not to destroy matrimony. Where its provisions have not been observed and a marriage is in consequence invalid in the eyes of the church, the Catholic party is urged, not to separate, but to validate the marriage. Where, owing to the objection of the non-Catholic party, this cannot be accomplished by a second ceremony of marriage, it can be brought about (where both parties consent,) by a special dispensation. Such being the case and considering the civil consequences already pointed out of the Catholic party attempting to withdraw from a marriage valid according to law (even though invalid in the eyes of the church) the separations of man and wife due to the decree *Ne Temera* cannot be otherwise than infinitesimally small.

It is well within the mark to say that for every separation of man and wife chargeable to the *Ne Temera*, there are a thousand instances due to other causes. And the existence of the decree prevents the separation of many hundreds more.

The three causes to which I have alluded embrace the largest number. Then why should not those Zealous critics of Catholic church discipline, interest themselves in the one thousand erring brethren, rather than in the one Catholic fallen from grace.

A GREYNA GREEN.

The advocates of free and easy marriage laws must have received a rude shock on reading the recent press reports describing the matrimonial traffic at Niagara Falls where the rivalry between Ministers is so keen that to secure business they divide the fees with the cabman who brings the couple from the opposite side of the river to be united under Canadian law.

Can it be that our law is less inquisitive than the New York State? Ministers at Windsor are also reported to be enjoying a profitable business in marrying couples who cross the river at Detroit. Divorces in the State of New York are in the proportion of one to every five marriages, the explanation may be that the lovers take pains and thus avoid the cost and publicity of the Divorce Court.

At the last Central Canada Exhibition there was a performance by Cowboys and on the same day a special attraction was arranged to consist of "A Wedding on horseback." A "Cowboy and his girl" were to be united. A minister was found to perform the ceremony, and "the divine institution" was degraded but received the applause of the spectators. And yet if one of the parties had been a Catholic in the opinion of the Ecumenical Council, the Catholic church would have been obliged to recognize the union because the ceremony was in accordance with the requirements of the civil law.

The women of Canada are deeply interested in this subject. They are the greatest sufferers; We owe them much for the growth of temperance, and they are constantly battling for other reforms. Are they prepared to see the sacred union that our Heavenly Father has blessed, degraded as it is being in this age? From the laxity attending the marriage ceremony, trial unions and mutual amities are being advocated and already practiced in countries that profess an advanced civilization. The women of Canada have it in their power to check this yearly increasing degradation of the marriage tie by advocating higher and holier modes of entering into conjugal unions.

PREVENTS HASTY MARRIAGES.

The purpose of the *Ne Temera* is to prevent hasty and ill-considered marriages, and not as has been stated to separate man and wife after marriage.

The introductory paragraph begins as follows:—

"To make prudent provision against the rash celebration of sacred marriages which the church of God has always deprecated and forbidden." The most important provision is to the effect that only those marriages are valid which are contracted before the parish priest and at least two witnesses. Now compare that provision with the Pastoral letter of the House of Episcopal Bishops read in all Anglican churches in May last:

"No clergyman of our church shall officiate at the marriage of any divorced person during the lifetime of the former partner. "It is a holy ordinance instituted by God and is the foundation of our social and family life." The church and state must unite to guard the marriage bond and to preserve its indissolubility."

"We greatly deplore the lowering of the ideals and purposes of marriage which is so common in many quarters. It is of the gravest moment that they who enter into this state should be married by a clergyman of the church before proper witnesses and where it is possible in the church building and that they should be in agreement concerning their religious connections. Mixed marriages are ever to be deprecated." The Catholic doctrine endeavors to give effect canonically to those views, but nevertheless is practically over-ridden by the civil law.

CAN FRAME LAWS.

The sentiments expressed in the Anglican pastoral and resolution adopted by the Methodist Council previously quoted harmonize in all important points. These two religious bodies embrace a population in Ontario in excess of all other denominations combined. They have it in their power to frame the marriage law of the province in conformity with the sound principles they have so earnestly advocated. If they will only give effect to them in the way I have indicated those marriage customs "styled rude and barbarous" will cease.

"Hasty and ill considered marriages" will be fewer. Divorces will not increase as rapidly as at present. The House of Bishops will no longer have "to deplore the lowering of the ideals and purposes of marriage which is so common in many quarters." The crime of bigamy will diminish and Ontario will be blessed by a higher tone of morality.

If these two powerful bodies will not take up and improve the marriage law then before condemning the Catholic church for its efforts to elevate matrimony as a divine institution sacred and indispensable to social order" then let the members of these two denominations reflect on our Lord's advice in the third part of the Sermon on the Mount, Cap. 7 St. Matthew: "Judge not that you may not be judged"—and "why seest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye; and seest not the beam that is in thy own eye."