

## The Divorce Problem.

(By a Regular Contributor.)

In one of the New York dailies a series of articles has been appearing for some time back, upon the Divorce Question or Problem. The latest of these contributions, and probably the most important, is from Bishop Samuel Fallows, of the Reformed Episcopal Church. Of the series this one is Article XXXIII., so it can be readily understood that the entire symposium must constitute a considerable volume.

Bishop Fallows takes up the question by asking if marriage is a divine institution, or a civil contract. He makes numerous distinctions, especially as between non-Christians and Christians, between non-Christians on both sides, and between Christians, that is to say those duly baptized, on both sides. Then he distinguishes between the Church in both of its dual attitudes regarding marriage; its attitude towards those of its own fold and those outside its jurisdiction. He separates what he calls the Western Church—the Roman Catholic—from the Eastern Church or Greek one; and he again separates both of these from the Protestant Christian churches.

The conclusion arrived at would seem to be that marriage is simply a civil contract as far as regards the unbaptized, or the non-Christians, and that it is a divine institution in its connection with the Christian churches, but one differently considered by different churches. In all this, which is very confusing and very indefinite, we find that he isolates entirely the Catholic Church. Of the many statements made by His Lordship, concerning our Church we may quote the following:—

"The Church, however, maintains that Christ Jesus restored marriage among His followers to its pristine position. The Western branch, or the Roman Catholic Church, after many conflicting opinions among its leading teachers, holds that Christian marriage, that is, a marriage between baptized Christians, cannot be annulled for any cause whatever. There may be separation of the parties, but no right of either one to remarriage is conceded."

He calls this the "extreme position of the Western Church." He sets forth the Protestant position in these words:—

"The various Protestant divisions of the Church Catholic have in general held to the position that our Lord taught that divorce was admissible in the case of adultery with the right of remarriage to the innocent party."

And he says that it is "a mistake to suppose that the Pope can grant a dispensation of separation in the right of remarriage between Christians."

In fact, Bishop Fallows appears to be unprejudiced and to wish to give credit to the Catholic Church in all the good will that he possesses, he has failed to understand the Catholic Church's teaching. He dwells emphatically upon the point of "a divine institution;" and while so doing he seeks to show that God did not condemn divorce under the old Mosaic dispensation, and that in the time of Our Lord it was practised to a fearful extent amongst the chosen people. In a word, he would leave it to be understood, that our Lord tolerated divorce, without ever having sanctioned it. There is something lacking in the Bishop's apprehension of the Catholic Church's teaching. It seems to us that it is the faith that is wanting. Otherwise we cannot see how he could be so unbiased and yet fail to grasp the very secret of the problem.

It has never dawned upon him, in all his careful study of the subject, that, in the eyes of the Catholic Church, marriage is a sacrament. It is one of the Church's seven sacraments. A sacrament is a source of grace; it is, therefore, sacred, and necessarily of Divine establishment. While the Church has the delegated power from Christ of conferring each of the sacraments, it does not possess the power of effecting that which has been bestowed. The Church can baptize you; but once you are so baptized, the Church cannot unbaptize you, or efface the baptism that has been conferred. She cannot wipe out the absolution that she has given in the Sacrament of Penance. She may withhold it; but once given, she cannot undo it in your soul. She cannot undo that which she has done in giving you the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, nor that of Confirmation. She bestows upon you the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, but by no process possible can she

make ineffective or withdraw that sacrament once it has been administered. She confers Holy Orders; she ordains you to the priesthood. You are "a priest unto all eternity," and the Church is absolutely impotent to destroy your sacerdotal character. You may sin, you may abandon the Church, you may persecute her, you may sink to the lowest depths of infidelity; but you remain a priest all the same. She may excommunicate you, but she cannot recall the Sacrament of Holy Orders conferred on you, nor annul it in any degree.

What is true of these six sacraments is equally so of the sacrament of matrimony. Not marriage alone, but matrimony. That sacrament, once conferred, and in conditions that are not radically annulling, the Church cannot undo the tie, nor can she recall, or efface the sacrament. The priest is a priest for all time and all eternity; the married couple are married, are husband and wife, for all time, until death doth them separate. It is this idea of a sacrament that even the most enlightened Protestant mind cannot seize. Consequently it is useless to argue the problem of divorce with any man who does not possess the Faith; for, no matter how much good will he may have, he is sure to fail in understanding our Church and her dogma.

## GAELIC IN SCOTLAND

While studying the subject of the revival of the Gaelic language in Ireland, we came upon the following interview, which is of considerable interest:—

"The country dance, the crossroads festivity of the Irish peasantry, which had practically become a thing of the past in Ireland when I was there five years ago," said the Rev. Father Fielding, of Chicago, "is again in full swing in the old country, much to the delight of the lovers of an Irish Ireland." Father Fielding was a delegate to the Gaelic League convention. "A puritanical spirit totally alien to Irish character," he continued, "arose among the Irish clergy a decade ago, and every enjoyment and pastime of the young country folk was frowned upon. The great work done by the Gaelic League in Ireland has changed conditions. The League now pays Irish pipers and fiddlers to play at the crossroads dances, when, in view of all the old folk, the boys and girls of Erin enjoy themselves just as they did in the time Lever wrote about."

This gives an idea of how the Gaelic League is working in every direction, not only in seeking to keep alive and to revive the language, but also in bringing back the customs and traditions, the usages and habits of the people. It may be of interest to know that in Scotland there exists a strong Gaelic element that harmonizes strictly with that of Ireland in all that concerns the language of their fathers. According to the statistics recently published, taken from the Scotch census, we meet with facts and figures that cannot but prove of deep moment to all who have at heart the success of the Gaelic revival in Ireland. We will quote a few of those figures. Gaelic is the only language spoken by 28,106 persons in Scotland, while 202,700, or 4.5 per cent. speak both Gaelic and English. It is in the counties of Ross and Cromarty and Inverness, that most of the Gaelic speakers are to be found. In Ross and Cromarty, 12,171, or nearly 16 per cent. speak only Gaelic, and 39,292, or more than half the population, speak both Gaelic and English. In Inverness-shire 11,722 (13 per cent.) know only Gaelic, while 43,281 (48 per cent.) speak both languages. In Sutherland 65 per cent., and in Argyll 46 per cent. speak both Gaelic and English; but the proportion using Gaelic alone is small.

If such be the case in Scotland, and that in Ireland the percentage of Gaelic speaking people is far greater, we can see no reason why the language should be considered as it is by some, both dead and buried. The revival movement is forging ahead with astounding success and rapidity, and if it so continues for another decade there may be great hopes for the future of our Gaelic literature.

Ah! to those who have no knowledge it is easy to speak of processions of angels; but to those who have seen where an angel is—how they flock upon us unawares in the darkness so that one is confused, and scarce can tell whether it is a reality or a dream—to those who have heard a little voice soft as the dew coming out of the heavens—the angels do not come in processions; they steal upon us unawares, they reveal themselves to the soul.

## The Evils Rome Suffers

In the "Messenger Magazine" for October, a writer signing "S. J.," continues a series of most instructive articles, under the heading "Pilgrim Walks in Rome." It is difficult for any observer to write anything very new about Rome. Yet this author has found the secret of telling oft-repeated stories in such an entertaining and fresh manner, that they appear as perfectly new. His whole series deserves careful study. There is one chapter, however,—"XII. Reflections at Porta Pia"—which is so full of information that we have decided to take it entirely from the magazine and reproduce it for our readers. There are thousands alive to-day who can recall the stirring events of 1870. That was the year of the great Franco-Russian war; it was also the year that witnessed our Canadian Zouaves depart for Italy, and there—*from Castelfedara to the Porta Pia*—testify to their Catholic devotion in the most practical and heroic of manners. The defeat of the Papal defenders, and the triumph of Garibaldi and his red-shirted rabal-army, produced effects that still are felt in all their bitterness. But, at this distance, many of us are not able to gauge the enormity of the evils that fell upon Rome since that day, and in consequence of that day's work.

The chapter to which we refer contains a list that may suffice to awaken our co-religionists to the importance of the situation of the Church in Rome, ever since the Piedmontese army burst into the Eternal City. We take the chapter just as it is. It needs no comment; for to comment upon it fully would necessitate a volume. It is an epitome of thirty odd years of injustice. It runs thus:—

"Thirty-two years have flown since the Piedmontese entered Rome, and the chief actors in that deed of sacrilege have gone to their account. It may be well to pause for a moment or so at Porta Pia and reflect on all the evils the Church and Christian morality have suffered during that period and are still suffering:

- (1) Loss of the Pope's Temporal Power, with consequent loss of independence in the government or the Church.
- (2) Imprisonment of the Holy Father in the Vatican.
- (3) Suppression of religious orders and congregations, as such; seizure of their houses, churches, and all their property.
- (4) Sequestration (euphemistically termed "conversion into Italian bonds") of the property and revenues of all basilicas, collegiate and parochial churches, colleges and confraternities.
- (5) Forced military service of priests, clerics and religious.
- (6) The most shocking insults offered to the Holy Father (in violation of the Law of Guarantees) and to the clergy, day after day in the public press. The mind sickens at the thought of the coarse, revolting caricatures seen every week in nearly every street of priests, bishops, and even of the Vicar of Christ.
- (7) Public demonstrations in the streets against the Pope and the Church, notably at the inauguration of the statue of the apostate friar, Giordano Bruno, when a dark banner of Satan was flaunted through the streets.
- (8) The attempt to cast the body of Pope Pius IX. into the Tiber.
- (9) The spread of heresy, as mentioned above.
- (10) The spread of corruption among the young by the irreligious teaching in the public schools. Many of those selected as teachers are professed infidels, men totally unfit to be in contact with children. Carducci, the author of the "Hymn to Satan," held a professorial chair in the Roman College.
- (11) The growing disregard of decency. Indecent representations are exposed everywhere, which have a corrupting effect on the heart and mind. Shameful statues are erected in public places, such as would disgrace a pagan city.
- (12) The multiplication of bad newspapers, full of blasphemous insults and filthy garbage, with the avowed object of making religion odious.
- (13) Scandalous desecration of the Sunday by unnecessary public works.
- (14) Widespread misery among the poor, suffering from bad seasons, want of employment and cruel taxation of the most necessary articles of food. Discontent is driving thousands every year from the country, and thousands into the ranks of the Socialists.
- (15) The ruin of the religious orders who used to befriend the poor.

A non-Catholic correspondent in the "Spectator" of June 11, 1898, says: "In old days the religious orders, scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land, helped the people over periods of distress by finding work for them and distributing alms, just as we assist the natives of India during a famine. Practically they formed a network of benevolent societies, and the peasant felt that he had them to fall back upon. The monastery lands and industries have now, for the most part, passed into the hands of speculators or rich absentee landlords, and at the same time the proceeds of their sequestration have been squandered in inflating the army, in political bribery and in a futile colonial policy."

(16) Sequestration of the funds of the Opere Pie, or pious foundations for hospitals, orphanages, asylums, etc.

(17) The alarming spread of Socialism, robbing the poor man of his one consolation, religion, filling his mind with hatred of all authority, spiritual and temporal, and with wild ideas tending directly to anarchy."

## St. Anthony and The Robbers.

The chronicles kept by the missionaries in all lands are full of quaint tales. One from Father John Lopez, O.F.M., missionary in the Holy Land, contains the following:—

In the year 1764, the Franciscan missionaries in the Holy Land were much troubled by Osman Pasha, Viceroy of Damascus, who was taking money that belonged to the missionaries. Catholics throughout the world had given alms for the support of the holy places in Palestine, and of this they had been deprived by the orders of the Viceroy.

At last the Fathers were in such need of funds for their daily food, they could remain silent no longer, but entered complaint to the Sultan.

After due deliberation the Sultan sent an order commanding the Viceroy to restore to the Procurator-General of the Franciscans the sum of money unjustly retained by him. If the Viceroy did not restore this money within three days, he would be beheaded.

The Sultan even directed the manner in which the money should be restored. It was to be given to the Legate, who would convey the Sultan's commands to the Viceroy, and the Legate was to take the money to Jerusalem. At Jerusalem he was to be received by the people with singing and instrumental music, and a general rejoicing.

The Viceroy was engaged when he received the order. For two days he refused to obey the Sultan; but fearing to be beheaded, the third day he publicly declared he would deliver the money to those miserable dogs, the Franks."

At the last moment he delivered the money to the Legate; but he had made arrangements with some robbers that they should waylay the party and steal the money, and thus prevent the Legate's triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

The robbers made their plans, and after the Legate and his attendants had entered the land of Galilee, the attack took place, and they were about to seize the money, when, lo! a strange thing happened.

It seems that one of the members of the company was a Franciscan monk in disguise. When the money was being put into the saddle-bag, at Damascus, the monk had put into the bag a small statue of St. Anthony, and had begged the good saint to guard the money, for he knew the needs of his brother Franciscans in the Holy Land. When the robbers were about to seize the saddle-bag, the mule started and was soon out of sight. All efforts on the part of the robbers to find the mule failed.

Through woods and over rocks and hills and streams ran the mule, and about seven hours after his sudden departure he was standing meekly at the door of the Franciscan convent in Nazareth.

The Fathers in Nazareth did not know what to do with their strange guest, and as they thought the animal belonged to a stranger, no effort was made to learn the contents of the saddle-bag.

Some hours after, the Legate and his attendants arrived. There was general rejoicing when the mule and his valuable load were found, and all returned sincere thanks.

The instructions of the Sultan regarding the entrance to Jerusalem were carried out, and the money was used as the generous donors desired, for the preservation of the holy places in the Holy Land.—Adapted from Journal of Franciscan Missionaries, Sarah Stevens.

## The Catholic Press.

The need and value of a first-class Catholic newspaper are only partially realized by the Catholic laity as well as by the Catholic clergy. The Catholic laity stand in special need of an influential Catholic press, to champion their rights, to promote their spiritual and moral and social welfare, to further whatever good projects they may wish to inaugurate and to help to carry them to a successful issue, and to point out to them the weak points, if any there be, in movements set on foot for desirable, or supposedly desirable reforms. It often happens that a section of the Catholic laity considers it has a grievance, and that its members try to bring about a change or a reform with undue haste and without proper consideration, and, above all, without consulting their Catholic neighbors. With a well supported Catholic newspaper they could take it into their confidence, and lay before it their real or imaginary grievances confident that these would be carefully and intelligently discussed. If they were found to be based upon fact, Catholic paper would take up the question and agitate it fearlessly and, at the same time, with becoming prudence and in a thoroughly loyal Catholic spirit. In this way alone can legitimate grievances be removed, or desirable reforms be brought about. Everything would be done in a practical manner; and the Catholic newspaper, being the recognized organ of a united people, would secure a respectful and an earnest hearing. Projects planned in secret and propounded by a section or a group naturally fail because they lack the united and vigorous support which a Catholic newspaper alone could give them.

In order to place a Catholic newspaper in a strong and independent financial position, the hearty goodwill and the practical sympathy and co-operation of the laity are absolutely necessary. Every individual reader should regard it as a duty to secure all the subscribers for it that he can obtain, and all the advertising patronage which he can influence. The clergy, too, have it in their power to extend valuable assistance to the Catholic newspaper in these two lines. They control no small amount of advertising themselves, in connection with educational institutions, parochial concerts and other similar events. The laity, as purchasers and consumers, as directors and stockholders of various commercial and other institutions, can lend considerable assistance, in the way of advertising patronage, to a Catholic newspaper. The task is by no means a difficult one. All that is required is a combination of earnestness, goodwill and a real desire to help along a good cause in which they themselves are very much interested whether they realize the fact or not.

We have frequently referred to the peculiar and anti-Christian tinge of a class of sensational articles that the more or less "yellow" press of presents to its readers. A fair example of this style of journalism may be found in the following story which we take from an American secular newspaper. It was published under the caption "A Physician's Last Hours."

A physician prominent in New York State was interested in manufacturing. While visiting his factory one day his coat was caught in a shafting and he was hurried around and around with terrific force, and every time he went round his legs struck an adjacent wall.

When he was finally released he was found to be still alive and physicians were hurriedly sent for. A half dozen of them came, and shook their injured brother, and shook their heads.

"I knew it," said the man. "I've already diagnosed the case. You'd just be wasting your time if you tried to do anything. But tell me, don't you agree with me that I'll live about five hours before the shock takes effect?"

The six men of medicine nodded. "Then send for a lawyer."

The lawyer came. Rationally and calmly the crushed man dictated his last will and testament and signed it with a hand as steady as that of a man in full health.

"Now," he said, when the last

witness had affixed his signature, "please send for my wife."

A little later on he said: "Call up Mr. Blank and Mr. So-and-so on the 'phone and say that I want to talk over some important business matters with them."

For over an hour the three partners arranged for the conduct of the doctor's business interests after his death. The conference ended, the injured man turned to his wife:

"Now, dearest," he said, "I've still an hour to live. Give me a cigar, take hold of my hand, and we'll wait patiently for the end."

And so he died, with a smile on his lips and the blue smoke of the cigar curling about his head."

The foregoing, as well as many other examples, is presented as something to be admired. We will not concede to any one a greater admiration than that which we possess for the heroic, the stoical, the disinterested. No doubt the doctor in question displayed great nerve, considerable surgical experience, and a wonderful command over himself. But there is something very sad in the contemplation of such a death. It is a pity to see a brave man going into the presence of God amidst a cloud of cigar smoke instead of a volume of prayers. There is such an amount of paganism in the picture that while we could admire such a death in an ancient Roman gladiator, Greek soldier, or even in one of America's primeval savages, we fail to see any beauty or grandeur in the same prayerless, thoughtless, God-ignoring death, when the principal actor is an educated and probably a self-supposed Christian gentleman. This is materialism in its most emphatic form. It is the sad transition of a proud soul from the passing scenes of this life to the theatre of eternal existence—a transition that is made with this world's fleeting interests dominating and effacing all thoughts of the awful Presence beyond.

We have no reason to complain if heroic spirits are set before us as examples of endurance under pain; but we consider such samples of the stoical and brave as very sorry lessons for a rising generation of young Christians. It is little wonder that the world is drifting so rapidly away from God and religion when the examples set before the eyes of the young are calculated to fire them with a desire to die—no matter how bravely—in positive ignorance of an eternity and in apparent contempt for prayer and for God.

## Great Christian Brother

The funeral of the Rev. Brother Erminold, director of St. Mary's College, Oakland, California, who died last week, was notable for the large number of citizens of all classes and creeds who attended it, thus showing the affectionate esteem in which he was held. He was entering upon his forty-ninth year when death came upon him almost suddenly, a day after he had returned from the funeral of the late Father McKinnon, at San Francisco. The Rev. Father Yorke delivered a touching eulogy of the deceased at the High Mass of Requiem in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, in the course of which he said: "Forty-eight years ago Charles O'Donnell was born in Ireland. He was born in the family of one of those honest, industrious, God-fearing farmers who constitute the backbone of Ireland. In early youth he learned the traditions of his native land and his mind became impregnated with its patriotic ideas and the devotion to the Mother Church that has always characterized its people. At his mother's knee, he learned the precepts of the Catholic faith, to which he was so devoted all his life. As he loved his faith, he loved the land. Its romance and chivalry captivated his ardent imagination. He loved the history of Erin and her literature. He was jealous of her honor and devoted to the welfare of her children, both in this world and the next. He was not ashamed to carry around a primer of the Gaelic language, for he knew that the preservation of native speech is the touchstone of Irish nationality."

"It is not too much presumption to believe that our dear friend and brother is numbered with the blessed to-day. He died in the Lord, and his works were with the Lord and for the children of the Lord. He left this world in the name of God. His life was a life of works, a life of works for the sanctification of man and the glory of God. His works have followed him. His life was a life of self-sacrifice."

We are always more profitably employed in praising God than even in despising ourselves.