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DIVORCE IN AMERICA

Cardinal Gibbons Scathingly Denounces Modern Barbarism of Society

One of the most notable and important contributions to the discussion of the divorce problem was supplied by Cardinal Gibbons' sermon delivered in the Cathedral at Baltimore. The text follows:

The Cardinal said: Jesus Christ is the only enduring name in history. He exerts today a vital influence on the political and social as well as on the moral and religious world, such as was never wielded by any earthly ruler. In contrast with the founders of empires. Of systems of religion, and of the framers of laws, we may say of Him, in the language of Holy Writ: "They shall perish, but Thou shalt remain, and all of them shall grow old as a garment. And as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou, O Christ, art always the selfsame, and Thy years shall not fail."

Kings and emperors have sought in various ways to perpetuate their name and fame. But their deeds and their very name have faded away in the lapse of ages; or they have left after them the shadow of a once mighty name which now evokes no enthusiasm and inspires no lofty sentiments.

The Kings of Egypt erected for themselves those mighty Pyramids, which were to serve as tombs to preserve their mortal remains and as monuments to immortalize their glorious deeds. The Pyramids exist unto this day amid the sands of Egypt after a lapse of 5,000 years, and they seem destined to be as enduring as the mountains. But who are the kings that built them? What have they done in their day? The diligent researches of historians and antiquarians leave us to no more or less conjecture as to the names of the monarchs who erected them.

Christ our Lord built for Himself no tomb, and He left no instructions to His disciples to erect one for Him. When living, He could say to Himself: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head;" and He had no monument when dead, which could be called His own. He was buried in the tomb of a stranger, Joseph of Arimathea. There was no inscription on His tomb, but His name is emblazoned on the pages of history and is indelibly stamped on the heart of humanity.

And even His tomb is honored today as no resting place was ever honored before or since His time. The Prophet Isaiah had predicted that "His tomb shall be glorious." And how well is the prophecy fulfilled! It is now the rendezvous of the nations of the earth. Christians and Mohammedans, Greeks and Latins, are contending among themselves as to which of them shall have the honor of guarding and adorning the church where His body was interred.

Other men have sought to immortalize themselves by military exploits and conquests. Alexander the Great extended his dominion over the continent of Asia. Kingdom after kingdom yielded to his sway. He longed for new worlds that he might subdue

them. But scarcely was he laid to rest in his tomb, when his vast empire was divided and parceled among his liege lords. Who cares now for Alexander? What enthusiasm does his name excite? Where is the mausoleum erected to his memory? His history is known to scholars, but the great mass of humanity know or care as little for Alexander as they know or care for Alexander the copper-smith mentioned by St. Paul.

Nearly 2,000 years ago Jesus Christ founded a spiritual republic. He established it not by the material sword, but by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. He established it not by brute force, but by an appeal to the conscience and intellect of humanity. He conquered not by enslaving the bodies of men, but by rescuing their souls from the bondage of sin. He conquered not by shedding the blood of others, but by the shedding of His own blood. And the spiritual kingdom which He founded exists to this day, and is continually extending its lines; and it is maintained and consolidated not by frowning fortifications and standing armies, but by the invincible influence of religious and moral sanctions.

Jesus Christ hanging from the cross has drawn to Himself a mightier host than ever followed the standard of Caesar and Alexander. "When I am lifted up from the earth," he declared, "I will draw all things to Myself. I will draw them by the cords of love." Other leaders have captured cities. Jesus Christ has captured the citadel of the heart.

In contemplating those great men who have been conspicuous in history, the predominant sentiment we feel toward them is one of admiration. And our admiration increases in proportion as we see them ascending the pinnacle of fame. But we cannot be said to love them. They are too far removed from us to be loved. They dazzle us by their splendor, but do not warm our hearts. A man to be loved must come down to our own level. We must be on familiar terms with him. Christ in this respect differs from all other great men. We not only admire and worship Him, we love Him. He has come down among us. He has become one of us. He has lowered Himself to our estate. He has shared in our sorrows and infirmities. He has become the Son of Man that we might be made the sons of God. He has been our Friend, our Brother, our Counselor. The great Christian world loves him. Millions in every age have enrolled themselves under His banner, and are ready to die for Him.

Other sovereigns have signalized their reigns by framing laws for the government of their respective countries. Numa, Pompilius, and long after him, Justinian, made laws for Rome. Solon and Lycurgus framed laws for ancient Greece. Alfred the Great and Edward the Confessor legislated for England. Napoleon compiled laws for France, which are well known by the title of the Code of Napoleon. All these statutes were of most useful in their day and generation. They were justly admired for their wisdom. But these laws were national in character. They were suited to the type of one particular people, and were framed for one particular form of government. They grew more or less obsolete in the course of ages. The people outgrew them, and a change in the form of government, involved a change in the fundamental laws of the country.

Christ has left us a code of laws in the Gospels. These moral precepts are immutable, because they are founded on the eternal principles of truth and justice. They have already stood the test of 2,000 years; they are as vigorous and as authoritative to-day as when they came from the lips of their divine Founder. And they will be binding in the consciences of men as long as human society itself shall last.

They are adapted to all times, to all places, to all circumstances and conditions of life. They are in force in every system of government, in absolute empires in constitutional monarchies and in free republics.

They appealed to the intellect and conscience of the ancient Greek and Roman; they appeal now to the subjects of Great Britain and to the citizens of the United States, as well as to the native tribes of Australasia and North America. The Sermon on the Mount and the Great Commandment of charity: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and soul, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," are as much binding on us as they were on the primitive Christians.

Christ, then, is not merely a man of history. He is not like other great men who have appeared in the theatre of life, have played their part and disappeared from view. He is not a meteor that has flashed across the firmament of the world and was suddenly extinguished. No. He is the Sun of Justice, shining on men down the ages, enlightening their minds, warning their hearts and causing the

fruits of grace and sanctification to grow in their souls.

He is walking to-day on the troubled waters of life, and He walked of old on the Lake of Genesareth. When Peter beheld his Master walking on the sea, he fancied it was only an apparition. But Christ was there all the same. No less truly is He moving on the agitated ocean of the world. He is lifting up many a sinking soul from the sea of sorrow and tribulation, and saying to the warring elements, "Peace, be still."

Countless multitudes of hungering souls are following our Saviour to-day as they followed Him of old into the desert, and are receiving from Him the bread of heavenly consolation. Oh! how many a desolate heart cried out to Him in its anguish with Peter and says, "Lord, to whom shall we go but to Thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Jesus Christ confronts us at every step. We see Him with the eyes of faith. We hear His friendly voice, we feel the warm pressure of His hand. His name is on everybody's lips. Lives innumerable are written of Him. Volumes are published commenting on every word that fell from His sacred lips. During the recent Christmas holidays the Christian world celebrated with joy the anniversary of His birth. Both houses of Congress were prorogued; the courts of justice adjourned; the schools and academies were closed for the season that all might take part in the festivities. And thus the whole civilized world unites in paying homage to Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary.

Christ is the only living force that can regenerate society. He is the only genuine social reformer. The nation is sick and the malady is all the more dangerous because the patient is unconscious of the disease. We are so intoxicated by material prosperity that we are become indifferent to the higher aspirations of the soul.

If Christianity is the highest type of civilization, and who can deny it, then is it not true that we are retrograding instead of advancing in certain lines? We glory in our system of universal education, in our enormous wealth and in our territorial expansion? But these advantages are not evidences of Christian progress. Two thousand years ago Pagan Rome had all these temporal blessings. The wealth of the nations poured into her lap. Her empire extended over three continents. She excelled in the arts, in oratory, poetry, philosophy and literature, and in all the refinements of civilized society. Her paintings and sculpture, her literary productions are still our models. And yet, while she was in the zenith of her material splendor she was in a state of moral and political decay. In fact, she was lapsing into barbarism.

There is a barbarism more dense than the barbarism of the savage tribes of the forest. For the children of nature, taught by the God of nature, adored the Great Spirit. I speak of a barbarism which eliminates God and an overruling Providence from the moral government of the world, which takes no account of a life to come, and of the responsibilities attached to it.

There is a social scourge more blighting and more destructive of family life than Mormonism. It is the fearfully increasing number of divorce mills throughout the United States. These mills, like the mills of the gods, are slowly but surely grinding the domestic altars of the nation. Husband and wife are separated on the most flimsy pretences. And as if the different States of the Union were not sufficiently accommodating in this respect, South Dakota has the unenviable distinction of granting a decree of divorce for the mere asking of it, on the sole condition of a brief sojourn within her borders.

I can conceive no scene more pathetic, or that appeals more touchingly to our sympathies, than the contemplation of a child emerging into the years of discretion, seeing her father and mother estranged from one another. Her little heart is yearning to love. She longs to embrace both her parents. But she finds she cannot

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give her affection to one without exciting the resentment or displeasure of the other.

A lady prominent in social life said to me last year in Newport: "I do not recognize any law human or divine that can deprive a husband or wife of the right to separate and to enter fresh espousals when they do not live in harmony together." You speak of your rights, your privileges. But you have not a word to say of your duties and obligations. Ah, my brethren, if men and women had due consideration for their duties and responsibilities, their rights would take care of themselves! There can be no rights where there are no corresponding obligations. There are no rights against the law of God.

O, Thou who art "a light to the revelation of the Gentiles," cast a ray of Thy divine light on our beloved country, that the spiritual and moral growth of the nation may keep pace with its material prosperity. Teach us to realize the fact that saving knowledge consists in knowing and worshipping Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. Teach us that he alone is free who enjoys the glorious liberty of the children of God, and that freedom which delivers us from the bondage of sin. That he alone is truly rich who abounds in grace and righteousness. Above all may we learn from Thee that the national honor and glory and genuine imperialism is found in the empire of the soul over its passions, and that greater is he who conquereth himself than he who taketh cities;" that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin maketh people miserable."

DEATH OF SIR CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY.

London, Feb. 10.—Sir Charles Gavan Duffy died yesterday at Nice, aged 86. Nearly sixty years ago he was a rebel Irishman, and was tried on a charge of treason and felony, but was not sentenced. Even when he arrived in Australia he announced himself as an Irish rebel to the backbone, but he lived to be Prime Minister of Victoria, and to accept a title from the Crown against when he had rebelled in his hot youth. The Daily Chronicle says he leaves a name of which Australia and the empire are proud.

THE YORK MUTUAL FIRE INSURANCE CO.

In another column will be found the report of the seventh annual meeting of the York Mutual Fire Insurance Company. A perusal of the report will be of interest, showing as it does the good progress that this well-known company is making.

THE POPE AS A POET.

Rome, Feb. 9.—The Pope has just completed a poem, which is highly praised by literary people. It is dedicated to a friend whom the Pontiff desired to advise on the best means of prolonging life.

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PHENOMENAL ADVANCE

(New York Freeman's Journal.)

"The Catholic Church is decadent. She is losing her influence. She cannot survive the advent of modern enlightenment and the evolution of intelligence. The Pope having lost his temporal power, is before the world but a private individual, and the Church, now at death's door, will soon be a thing of the past." Such and similar cries and prophecies find many believers among credulous people. But confidence in them has begun to wane. But a great change has come about, and those who rejoiced at her prospective funeral begin to recognize, reluctantly of course, that she is a living organism, animated by a vitality and forcefulness that gives her a commanding influence in the Christian world.

Our esteemed contemporary, The (Methodist) Northwestern Advocate, says: "The Roman Catholic Church has during the past few years taken upon itself new life. It is striving for world supremacy, to regain the power it has lost." In proof of its statement it quotes the words of Dr. Kolde, an eminent Church historian of Erlangen, Bavaria, who says:

"Few people, and only those who study modern facts in the light of church history, have any appreciation of the phenomenal advance made by the Catholic Church during the last decades, especially as a power in the political world and in the conquests of new spheres of thought and life. It is by no means a pleasant thing for the Protestants to contemplate; but it is an undeniable fact that not since the days of Innocent III. has the Papal system unfolded such splendor and power as in the present time. Not the Catholic princes, but rather the Protestant rulers are the ones who are trying to surpass each other in honoring the shrewd sage now occupying the throne in the Vatican, although it is in this same sage who has repeatedly called the Reformation a 'pest.' In other respects the Church has grown phenomenally. Each year the number of those who swell the ranks of the religious orders grows by the thousands, and in the German Empire alone there are now 40,000 of them. Not since the days of the Reformation have these orders, especially the Jesuits, developed the strength they evince in our days. The Catholics control the parliaments and they make our laws, and in countries like Germany, where State and Church are united, they even pass the laws regulating the affairs of the Protestant church. With every day the principle is gaining more and more ground that it is not ability and efficiency, but the attitude towards the Catholic Church that opens the way for candidates to positions in the State service. The statesmen of Europe are largely and in many cases mostly influenced in their international politics by the views that may prevail in the Vatican; and what is more remarkable, that which the ambitious Innocent III. failed to attain and that against which even Catholic princes and bishops have constantly protested, namely, the assigning of the position of judge on international difficulties to the Pope—this has been first voluntarily yielded to the Vatican by the leading Protestant powers of Europe, Prussia and Germany, the former of these also having been the first to recognize the Curia as a political power on equal footing with other powers by sending an ambassador to the Vatican."

C. M. B. A.
 London, Feb. 9.—The grand officers of the Catholic Mutual Benefit Association, consisting of Hon. M. F. Hackett, President; Hon. F. R. Latchford, Toronto; W. J. McKee, Windsor; Rev. S. E. Crinion, Dunnville, Dr. Ryan and J. Behan, Kingston, and Mr. P. J. O'Keefe, St. John, N. B., met this morning for the purpose of electing a Secretary in succession to the late Mr. S. R. Brown. Mr. Howison, the Assistant Secretary, was elected pro tem, and if satisfactory he will hold the position both as Secretary and French translator.

CROWDS ATTEND CATHOLIC LECTURES

(Owen Sound Times.)

The public meetings which have been in progress in the Town Hall this week under the direction of Rev. Fr. Paar, the Redemptorist Father from Saratoga, N. Y., have been very largely attended by the citizens of all denominations, and, indeed, many persons from the surrounding country have been attending nightly. Father Paar is one of the best known missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church in America, and certainly deserves the reputation he has gained for himself as an eloquent and entertaining platform speaker. In his meetings he has been assisted by St. Mary's Choir, and the splendid voices that comprise that branch of the church, have added very materially to the impressiveness and interest of the services. On Monday evening Father Paar gave a short but complete explanation of his religious garb and of the rosary. The "Hail Mary," the most frequently repeated prayer of the Rosary, he explained, is composed of salutations used by the angel Gabriel and St. Elizabeth when greeting the Virgin Mary, (St. Luke 1: 28-42.) The church, believing in the efficacy of the mother's intercession with her Divine Son, added the last part. Perhaps the best comment on this explanation was a remark made by a non-Catholic, "I shall never again laugh at the Rosary." Following this came the lecture proper. Logically he showed the necessity of a belief in God, and that God left a form of religion to be complied with. Then he dealt with the question, "Is one religion as good as another?" and gave forceful reasons in upholding his claim that one is not as good as another. If one is right every other one must necessarily be wrong. In conclusion the speaker said that each and every one was bound to be perfectly satisfied that it is right if he wishes to be in good faith with God. If the slightest doubt existed one must pray earnestly for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. An example of some of the questions which Father Paar has been called upon to reply to, may be mentioned as follows: "Why do Catholic priests and the Catholic Church not advocate prohibition?" "Does the Catholic Church teach that all non-Catholics are lost, and do all Catholics go to heaven?" "Does the Catholic Church instruct its members to oppose a 'hot of its fold'?" "Does a Protestant child, not baptized, go to hell?" "Space will not permit the detailed replies to these questions. To the first he replied in effect that the church advocated temperance in all things. It had its total abstinence societies and regarded the young man who was a total abstainer as heroic. As a political question prohibition had never reduced the evil of drink. The church demanded total abstinence of those who leaned to excess, but if it could be used temperately its use was tolerated. As to whether non-Catholics were lost, there were those who acted in good faith and had faith. Every man had a conscience inward moral law, and the heathen who never heard of God would be judged by the laws of nature. The non-Catholic who conscientiously believed in the doctrines of his denomination and lived a good life, would get to heaven. All Catholics did not live up to the teaching of the church. A Catholic who was a drunkard or a thief was a disgrace to the name, and a Catholic in name only. The Catholic Church did not instruct its members to oppose all not of its fold. They taught their people to love their neighbors as themselves. Does a Protestant child not baptized go to hell? In reply to that question Father Paar emphasized the fact that baptism was absolutely necessary. The church absolutely demanded baptism, a rebirth of water and the Holy Ghost. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned." The address of the evening was on "Faith." During the service the audience joined in the singing of "Lead, Kindly Light" and "Nearer My God to Thee." Last night the answers to the questions asked were of absorbing interest. The Catholic view and belief were clearly set forth and lie and calumny refuted. Ex-priests, said Father Paar, acted on the principle of the infidel and infamous Voltaire, "Lie, lie, lie like the devil and something will stick." The greater number were imposters. Some were not. "Do you take as truth the word of a man who breaks a solemn vow made at God's altar? The Catholic priest who left the Church, left it because the church has vitality enough to cast off bad members. Why not first ask them, 'Why did you not live according to

your vow?" The church placed certain restrictions on her priests. If they did not live in accordance therewith they were cast off. Those who left non-Catholic churches went where? To the Catholic Church. Those priests who left the Catholic Church did what first? Took a wife—and sometimes not only one. The Catholic Church received the cream from the non-Catholic; they received the offal from it. Only a short answer was given to the request for Scriptural proof that man must confess his sins to a man. This would be fully dealt with on Saturday evening, the subject for that evening being Confession. In regard to the use of images and pictures, to which objection was taken, the reverend gentleman proved from Scripture that there was no prohibition in God's law against the use of images and pictures. On the contrary it was in accordance with God's law to have them. The limitation was that they must not adore them. They made use of such a means to raise the mind to heaven. "Where is your foundation for the existence of purgatory?" A strong point in the explanation of this was made. The speaker quoted Matthew 12: 32, "He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this nor in the world to come." This implied that some sins were forgiven in the next world. In heaven? No, for nothing defiled could enter the kingdom of heaven. In hell? No, for out of hell there was no redemption. Then there must be a third place. Co. 3: 10-15 was also quoted. Either a man must admit that there is no difference between mortal and venial sin or he must admit the existence of purgatory. If a man guilty of a slight fault only, die suddenly, without time to make atonement, is he condemned to hell? Is he to suffer the same as he who dies in mortal sin? The dominant idea in the lecture which followed was that faith could be obtained only and solely by teaching just as in the time of the Apostles. Thursday's subject is the Bible and Tradition;

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