

A CHURCH FOR THE AGE

The better spirit in the Protestant Episcopal Church, we regret to say, has not prevailed in the discussion of the divorce question. Worldliness and what Catholics know as "human respect" have triumphed over the revolt of decency and purity, and men and women who degrade the holiest of human compacts are free in the Protestant communion to sever the marital tie and make new personal arrangements at their own pleasure, just as they did before. Could we regard the underlying question merely as a criterion of the quality of the Protestant religion as a restraining force—to put it on its most excusable ground—we might view the result with complacency. But there's the rub. We live in a world that moves. The issue involved has as much to do with the practical side of life as the moral. Practicality and morality, in this case, go hand in hand. The moral atmosphere is no less important a factor in our daily life than the physical one. When volumes of sooty or sulphurous smoke are shot into the air from factory stacks, amid a crowded population, our public health machinery is at once set in motion to suppress or abate the danger. But we have no machinery provided for the repression of dangers as deadly, though not so immediately visible, to our social system as those which curtail our physical life.

The conditions which underlie the facts regarding the practice of divorce in the United States are too grave to be regarded from any lower point of view than should obtain when the whole community is threatened with pestilence. A moral plague is here with us, and shall we not rise to the level of the danger? We can take precautions against plague and pestilence, even though these be in the air. But we can adopt no antiseptic measures when the poison is in the atmosphere of the home and the mind and the heart. When the sacred principles upon which the home is founded, the tender tie which links soul to soul, husband to wife, child to parent, blessed by "the voice that breathed o'er Eden," are held as commodities in the mart, our plight is worse even than that of heathendom in ancient Greece and Rome. We know that we are violating the ordinance of a Divine lawgiver; the consul or centurion who put away his wife, and the wife who was false to her husband under Claudius or Tiberius, broke nothing higher than a civil contract and the sentiment which accompanied it. It is our firm conviction that Messalina and Poppea, taking into account their surroundings and the moral standard prevalent in their day, were not a whit more culpable than some of the women who stand at the head of the divorce list in this country to-day, and are still received as members of respectable society.

Against this shocking evil the Episcopal Convention has deliberately refused to make a stand. "Society" has been too much for the assembled dignitaries. By declaring against the re-marriage of divorced persons they would be casting a slur—further—upon those already embraced in that disreputable category. They have deliberately put themselves on record as afraid to grapple with a breach of the Divine law so universal, so patent, so crying for redress that they could not as a deliberative body calling themselves Christian refuse to give it attention. Henceforth they have no right whatever to insist upon the right of their Church to have any part in the marriage service. Marriage has no sacramental character what ever, in Protestant eyes. The Bishops claim no voice in the matter of divorce or marriage, and if their Church is availed of by happy couples who contemplate a few years of experiment at matrimony, with a vista of a similar ceremony repeated at intervals, they can only regard it as part of the etiquette which prescribes a wedding cake, white gloves and rice-filled slippers for such joyous occasions.—Catholic Standard and Times.

WHAT SUBSCRIBERS CAN DO.

From the Church News. Subscribers can do much more than they are doing to hasten the advent of the ideal Catholic newspaper. In the first place, they could pay their subscriptions promptly without casting the publisher to become discouraged, because he has no money to pay the printers, paper bills, etc. When every subscriber to a Catholic newspaper makes the payment of his subscription a matter of conscience, and realizes that the success of the journal depends in part upon him, we may hope that the ideal Catholic journal will come. At present nearly every Catholic publisher has on his books bills amounting to thousands of dollars. The bills are generally for small amounts and could easily be paid. Were they paid the publisher would at once improve his paper—probably enlarge it—employ more writers and more correspondents. At present not a few subscribers will allow their subscriptions to remain unpaid, and when asked to pay them will become indignant and at once withdraw their subscriptions and declare the paper is not worth paying for. If it is not they should remember that they are in a measure at fault, because they have not met their obligations with the publisher and thus enabled him to improve his paper.

Many a Young Man. When from over-work, possibly assisted by an inherited weakness, the health fails and rest or medical treatment must be resorted to, then no medicine can be employed with the same beneficial results as Scott's Emulsion.

NOT THE LAST WORD.

For some weeks past an intermittent controversy has been waged in the New York Sun over the vexed question of physical evolution versus religious belief. Tired of the profitless discussion, the Sun a few days ago brought it to an abrupt ending, in a short announcement which closed with this remarkable statement:

"The science which recognizes the existence of nothing that it cannot prove naturally can have no argument with religious faith, and religious faith none with it, except to deny or affirm. I believe," says Faith. "I know and I accept nothing I do not know," says Science, and there the discussion properly should end."

The Sun is, no doubt, an able paper, but it cannot be accepted as an imminent authority on such a point. Every year that is passing is lessening the chasm that exists between true faith and true science. The school of scientists which insists upon having absolute practical demonstration of any fact it is called upon to investigate before it yields assent to its possibility is rapidly passing away. Rationalism and materialism are rejected by the best minds as utterly unsatisfying as a basis of philosophy and a key to the mystery of the universe. Faith, on the other hand, is daily gaining ground, because religion offers the only solution that our finite human mind is capable of grasping; and faith, in this light, is the very highest exercise of mortal reason. The contest over evolution, as an explanation of the origin of man, is simply a waste of time. Were the fact of a concatenation of gradual physical changes, leading from the algae up to mankind capable of ever being satisfactorily demonstrated, nothing would be proved but a fact in natural history. Only the animal part of humanity would be accounted for; the real man—that is, the soul, the mind and the heart—would still remain to battle all philosophical inquiry. Science ought to recognize its limitations; scientists do. Huxley and Tyndall, after trying their plummet lines in the depths of the Infinite, found it a sea unfathomable by scientific means. There was something behind all visible and tangible phenomena, they both confessed—a directing force and an everlasting energy in the presence of which the highest flights of man's intellect were but as the beating of a bird against the bars of its cage. The impious science which while denying the attributes of God would fain pluck from God the heart of His great mystery is now regarded as little better than learned charlatanism. The Sun is wrong. The argument between Faith and Science does not stop because the mere dogmatist says he requires nothing beyond his faith, and the skeptic that he doubts everything he cannot see or prove. In the field of human investigation there is noble work for the highest mind, and the true scientist will not be discouraged because the empiric metaphysician finds he cannot rise high enough to look across the walls of the Unseen.—Philadelphia Catholic Standard and Times.

A STORY, ALAS! TOO OFTEN TOLD.

"Well," Morris Cleburn said, as he entered the door of his home one day, "I can't get work. A man has no chance these days. I was talkin' it over with Hill jest now, an' he says it's the same with him. No job nowhere!" Mrs. Cleburn looked up from her ironing. "I find plenty to do," she said quietly. "Oh, yes, you women hev things all your own way, anyhow. As Hill sez—'Where did you see him—in the saloon?'" Mr. Cleburn was annoyed. "Why, yes. I jest dropped in there as I was passin' to speak to a man that owed me. There was't no harm in that, was there?" "No. Did he pay you?" "Yes, of course he did."

"Where is the money?" "Money? Oh, yes. I—I've got it here in—"

Mr. Cleburn made a fine show of searching in his pockets and then exclaimed: "I've been robbed! I had that money right here when—"

Mrs. Cleburn looked up resignedly. "When you went up to the bank to settle the labor problem with Hill? Well, don't look for it. The children and I can go without supper another night, I guess. Where are you going?" Mr. Cleburn was starting toward the door. "Goin'?" he asked more in sorrow than in anger. "I'm goin' where I can have some peace. There don't seem to be any of it here. A pleasant fideside," as Hill says, "is the greatest blessing a workin' man can know." But I hain't got one. I hain't got one."

He struck the door, as he had seen the play actor strike the flimsy canvas on the stage, and went back to the saloon. And Mary Cleburn smiled, as women do, above dead hope, dead love, and dead respect—and went on with her ironing.

TWO NATIONS.

Cardinal Vaughan, in an address recently delivered in Manchester, at the opening of an institution for the relief of the poor, taken charge of by a community of the Sisters of Charity, made some remarks which suggest, if not intended by the speaker to raise, a social question of very great importance. We have pleasure in reproducing them here, as they are well worthy of perusal and may, perhaps, set some of our readers thinking out a solution for a problem that concerns our own country nearly, if not quite, as much as it concerns England. This is how the Cardinal presented the situation:

It has been well said that this country is divided into two nations. We have the rich and we have the poor, separated, the one from the other almost as the French are separated from the English, or as one nation speaking one tongue is separated from another. These two nations the wealthy and the poor not only live apart, but they scarcely know what are the lives lived by each other. What do the rich in the suburbs, with their flower gardens and their grand houses, and their well-appointed homes, with carriages at their disposal, know of the lives of the poor? They know of the poor in the city for a few hours in the course of the day, when they carry on business on a gigantic scale and watch the operations which they have laid out with all the care and wisdom of the landowners, and then return to the fresh green fields, to their homes—what do they know of the lives of the people who live in those wretched and filthy tenements, in the midst of which the Sisters of Charity have made their home, and who have never seen the rich in the midst of the poor, nor the poor in the midst of the rich? And what is more, if the rich were the owners of their splendid domains only in name, and if they were to lose their wealth and their possession? But what is the fact? The fact is that the rich are the owners of the lands which give them pleasure, but they are the owners of the poorer parts of the great cities in which we live—in these parts scarcely any man lives in his own house, but the rich are the owners, the landlords of the districts in which the poor live as well as the landlords of their own flourishing and happy homes. And worse than this—for this could be tolerated—there are absentee landlords, and we know what an absentee landlord means—a man who draws his rent, a man, perhaps, who takes a rack-rent, a man who never comes personally into contact with those who are exacted from them by their landlords. I say the landlords do not come into contact with the poor, but they are the owners of the property in the vicinity to contribute to the support of their charitable institution. But work of this kind, though of course highly laudable, could never be an adequate remedy for the "two nations" evil. Charity in the form of almsgiving cannot fill up or bridge over the chasm between rich and poor, or restore the happy condition of former days referred to by the Cardinal. And the tendency of existing social influences seems to be in the direction of widening the chasm.

Manfully, Cardinal Vaughan regards the evil as a great and a serious one, and manifestly, too, he believes that the root of it is somewhere in land-owning or land holding economy. At least it is clear that he is against the absentee landlord system, and in taking this position he goes very far in the direction of radical land reform.

—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

A PLEA FOR THE BOYS.

"Boys are often self-conscious, awkward and ungainly. This makes them, by self-contradiction, lack the minor graces which facilitate intercourse. But one sweet, kindly word can straighten out the tangled knot of future manhood, and make him feel all glorious within and without. The want of this goodly word will confirm the awkwardness and restrain the budding promise of the boy. Let a grown person go, but don't banish the boy from the home circle. Take out some of your useless bric-a-brac, cracked teapots and esthetic crockery, and let God's image of yourselves have right of way. Remove the furniture and make a space for living souls."

"If the sister's fastidious regard for other boys, and various other repellent causes too numerous to mention, drive the lad away from the home circle, even eternity itself may prove too brief for the consequent regret. All young folk desire sympathy and friendship—boys as much as girls, girls as much as boys—and their griefs, troubles, successes and delights are as intense and real to them as yours and mine."

"Let the visitors who are invited by your son be treated with kindness more than ordinary. He will bring his society to you, instead of forming acquaintances from whom you pray he should be delivered, and the boy thus treated goes into the world with a shield against evil—a rampart even to the blue sky of God against the assaults of worry; it is the memory of home and the parents who love him."

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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AMERICA.

The history of Roman Catholicism in our western world began the day when the keel of the San Maria of Columbus grated on the beach of San Salvador. As the admiral stepped ashore he intoned the Gloria in Excelsis Deo. His little party were all Catholics; had held Catholic services every day they were on the trackless deep; had been present at the Mass and received Communion the day they started; had been gathered together under Catholic auspices, through the assistance of a Catholic monk, by means of the pledged jewels of a Catholic sovereign, and through the impelling motive of gaining new souls to Christ in the Catholic Church. A monk, a mariner and a mother—these three, symbolic of Faith, Hope and Charity—wrested the unknown land from the bosom of the ocean and opened a new continent where the highest providential designs of God were to be wrought out. The art of printing had been discovered fifty years before, and many other of the great instruments which produced our modern civilization had come into vogue. Martin Luther was then but a little German lad learning the catechism he was later on to repudiate.

When Columbus returned to Europe he brought with him six of the natives. These dusky savages were baptized into the Church, Queen Isabella standing as their godmother. These were the first native American Catholics. These six Catholics of 1498 have become the 10,000,000 of 1898.—From "The Religious Denominations of America," in Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly for September.

AN INFIDEL WHO TAUGHT CATECHISM.

Diderot, who was one of the greatest enemies of religion of the last century, was in the habit of teaching the Catechism to his daughter, who was only ten or twelve years old. He also obliged her to learn every week the Gospel, and perhaps the Epistle of the Sunday. One day when he was occupied in making her recite it, one of his friends, a philosopher like himself, came in. The visitor began to laugh and make merry over what he saw. "Is it possible," said he, "you are teaching your daughter the catechism! You are, then, no longer a philosopher?" "Why certainly," replied Diderot, "I make Marie learn both the Catechism and the Gospel. Is there anything better that I could teach her, to make her a good girl, a devoted woman, a kind and affectionate mother?"

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Mr. T. J. Humes, Columbus, Ohio, writes: "I have been afflicted for some time with Kidney and Liver Complaints, and find Parole's Pills the best medicine for these diseases. These Pills do not cause pain or griping, and should be used when a cathartic is required. They are Gelatine Coated, and rolled in the Flour of Licorice to preserve their purity, and give them a pleasant, agreeable taste."

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"Dear Sirs:—I am still praising Hood's Sarsaparilla for the great benefit both myself and husband derived from its use and I do not hesitate to say it is the best medicine we have ever used in our family.' Mrs. W. J. WILLETT, Mt. Holly, N. C."

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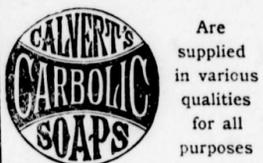
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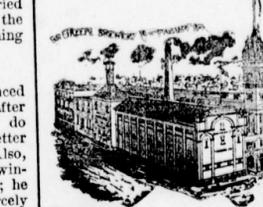


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