



REV. DR. CAHILL ON THE NEW DIVORCE BILL.

All those who are acquainted with the past history of Protestantism will not be surprised at any modern additional changes which the ecclesiastical British Parliament may now, or at any future time, introduce, in reference to the Ten Commandments of God, the precepts of the New Law, and the ordinances, the customs, and the discipline of Christian antiquity. It is not for the purpose of awakening any bitter animosities, or exciting any hostile feelings, that these remarks are made in the opening part of my present letter: no, it is to demonstrate, that the English Parliament are every day giving a mine beneath the constitution and the throne, by framing laws which ignore the Scriptures, and which let lose an unbridled immorality to give a more extended license to the already swollen crimes of England. And when once the public assent is combined in anger against admitted immoral or bad legislation, there is but a very small space, a very slender partition indeed between this public anger combination of mind, and the universal public will, to rebel against the legislators themselves. A river muddy at the source cannot send clear water through the surrounding territory: and if the people become poisoned from the infection of clearly immoral laws, the unhealthy future state of the nation must be ascribed to the Government who have themselves diseased the constitution at its very spring.—Time will tell. The people of Ireland have long learned from painful experience, with what an easy undisturbed conscience the English Senate have heretofore broken, over and over again, the commands of God and man in their regard: and hence, as they are quite familiar from the old Irish records with the infraction of the Fourth, the Fifth, the Seventh, the Eighth, the Ninth and the Tenth of the old Ten Commandments given to Moses on the Mount, they cannot be astonished in the present year of England's rule at any modification, alteration, change, or application which these rulers may please to make on the old Six Commandment of the Decalogue.—But there is one point on which the Irish Catholic is exceedingly astounded—namely, when he has read on one hand how Jehovah's dread presence on Sinai was announced amidst the accumulated flashes of the lightning and the tumultuous war of the thunder; and how Moses received the tables of the Law, while earth and mountains trembled, and men fainted away with fear. And having thus seen the circumstances of solemn awe in which these Commandments were given to the world, what must be our feelings when we behold these laws altered, mutilated, ignored, in a gilded room at St. Stephen's, by a set of English gentlemen, after dinner, amidst the cheers of one party, the indifference of a second, and the loud laughter of a third. Look on that picture, and look on this, and see if the British Legislature fulfills its duty to the God of Moses.

The Bill under consideration should be called "the Easement Profligate Bill," enabling all the vagabonds of Great Britain to get rid of old wives, and successively to marry a second, a third, a fourth, or any suitable number of future Parliamentary companions.

And the salutary enactment involves an extended clause, by which not only Dukes of the blood Royal, all the gradations of the Nobility, all Admirals, and Naval officers, all Generals and Military men, all the English Aristocracy, may take advantage of this law: but its wise, wholesome, and moral provisions include all Smiths, Carpenters, Bakers, Brick-layers, Stonemasons, Footmen, Coachmen, City Scavengers, Coblers, Scullions, down even to the Chimney-sweepers, and old clothes men. This is what is called in modern phrases the greatness and the glory of Great Britain, the liberty of the Bible: the profession of the pure work of God: the mark of the true Church: and the very types on earth of the blessed in Heaven! Well may the Catholics of Ireland laugh at Protestantism when this Bill shall have been passed. It should be printed before the preface in all our Catholic books to show the character of the law-Church: its provisions will bring more converts to Catholicity than Thomas a Kempis: all moral men and all honorable women will quit a communion where crime is protected, where adultery is rewarded, and where an old wife can be skillfully put aside, and then changed for a new one—like an old watch put out of repair. Doctor Whateley may now marry as many couples as he please, the Lord Chancellor can, under given provisions of the new Bill, marry them all. The Bishop can make them all happy in half an hour: the Chancellor can change their joys into tears in a week: Saint Patrick's Church and the Four Courts now show the light and shade of Protestant matrimony, and hence our Metropolitan and our Supreme Judge are the two poles of the Orthodox Church! After this consummation, Sodomism will flourish in Kilkenny and the Coombe, and the Irish must be anxious to join a congregation where the Decalogue is made shorter by

one Commandment! and where salvation can be obtained by the new change into a Nomologue! One reads with great pain the astounding diversity of opinion, on this point, of the Protestant Bench in the House of Lords: one party asserting one set of principles, while some others maintain the very contrary. At every step we proceed in the Ecclesiastical history of their doctrines we find the Protestant Church literally gone to pieces: they are now divided even on the Inspiration, the Translation, and the meaning of the Bible; and thus the country is paying eight and a half millions pounds sterling annually to sustain an institution in which there is no common faith, and which is passing almost daily in a rapid progressive movement towards the final termination of all Protestantism—namely, the mournful bourne of irrecoverable Deism. More strange still, the Episcopal Bench were not unanimous about the Scripture on the point at issue: and one of them stated "no matter what might be the conscientious opinions of their church on the provisions of the Bill, this conscience should always yield to the imperative supremacy of the legislature!" a decision well worthy of Cranmer, and of the first lawn Bishops of Elizabeth! I am enabled to prove from the incontestable facts of history, that there never was committed a crime which the predecessors of that legislature have not committed towards Ireland; and now at the end of centuries to hear one of their bishops make this Legislature into the inflexible guide of faith and morals, is an additional proof, if such were necessary, that the cancer of heresy eats its fatal way to the very heart, feeds on its devoted victims for centuries and centuries, and is never totally eradicated from the ill-fated nation which has first imbibed its deadly poison.

When the Duke of Norfolk attempted to refer the bill to committee, in order then to argue the Scripture of the case, he was treated with much courtesy for his "maulness," as the Lords called it; but all appeal to the Scriptures was politely refused and negatived! The Legislature, not the Scriptures, were to decide the case. All allusion to the Scriptures was refused with reverence and silence, as some persons listen to the feeble voice and advice of a superannuated grandmother; but further than this outward respect, the Lords begged to be excused, and nodded to the woosack, in token of their obedience to the woosack authority, rather than to King Charles's edition of the Sacred Volume. After this, I hope we shall hear no more of the value of the Sacred Volume from Protestant lips: the woosack and the Speaker's wig are now a paramount authority: so say the Episcopal Bench—the House of Peers! Now, the Scripture (Christ) is quite clear on this point, and in its own simple language (even unaided by the practice, the unbroken practice of the Catholic Church), will demonstrate positions the very contrary to the new Bill. This evidence, spoken by our Lord Himself, can be read in the nineteenth chapter of St. Matthew, verses 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. If any Catholic legislature were found to appeal from the Scripture to a majority of votes in their assemblies, the English Bibles, and the Rodens, and the Clancarty's, and the Whitesides, would reprobate Popery from every block and barrel in England and Ireland. And yet, here in our House of Peers, the very pink of Biblicism, they ignore *in toto* on this point, all appeal to the Sacred Volume.

Those who believe the present Bill to be a new statute are quite deceived; it is not at all a new thing: it is, on the contrary, an old thing; it is as old as Martin Luther himself: just the same age as the blessed Apostle of the Reformation! With this exception, however, that the apostle gave liberty to have two wives, two living wives at the same time—viz., the old one and the new one: while our present Legislature vary somewhat the moral discipline of Martin of blessed memory. They will allow any becoming number of wives successively: but only one at a time: this is considered a moral blessed life: two, three, four, or five successive mortal sins, being decided by the woosack as not amounting in guilt, to the same number of the same sins committed all together about the one time, and in one place: that is to say, a shilling every day for the six days of the week, does not amount to the same sum on a Saturday evening, as the same number of shillings collected all at once on a Monday morning! This is the theology of the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the late discussion of the Divorce Bill. I regret exceedingly I cannot have time in the present article, to extract *in extenso* the letter of Martin Luther and his associates, giving permission to the Landgrave of Hesse to have two living wives. I shall, however, make some few lengthened extracts from the first volume of Bossuet's variations, page 252:—

Chapter 3rd—"Your Highness is not ignorant how great need our poor miserable little church stands in need of virtuous princes to protect her; and we doubt not but God will always supply her with such.

Chapter 5th—"We cannot at present advise to introduce publicly as a law of the New Testament, that

of the Old, which permitted to have more wives than one. Your Highness is sensible it would be taken as a precedent, and scandals and sins would rise.

Chapter 10th—"Above all things, care must be taken that plurality of wives must not be introduced, or every man to follow what he thinks fit.

Chapter 12th—"Inferiors are no sooner informed what their superiors do than they imagine they can do the same, and thus licentiousness becomes universal.

Chapter 14th—"Your Highness, by the singular grace of God, has a great reputation in foreign countries: and we fear lest the execution of a double marriage would much diminish this respect and esteem.

Chapter 17th—"We have dwelled on several matters that your Highness may seriously consider that God does not look on certain vices as a laughing matter; and we are pleased to find that you are troubled with conscience on certain immoral extravagancies.

Chapter 21st—"If your Highness is fully resolved to marry a second wife, we judge it ought to be done privately; because no scandal need be apprehended. There is no need of being concerned about what men will say, provided all goes on well with conscience! So far we approve it as in those circumstances by us specified.

Chapter 22nd—"Your Highness, therefore, has not only the approbation of us all, but the reflections we have made thereon: we beseech you to weigh them, as becomes a virtuous prince, and we also beg of God to direct all for His glory and your Highness's salvation!

Chapter 24th—"May God preserve your Highness. We are most ready to serve your Highness.—Given at Wittenberg, the Wednesday after the Feast of St. Nicholas, 1539.

"MARTIN LUTHER,
"PHILIP MELANCTHON,
"MARTIN BUCER,
"ANTONY CORVIN,
"ADAM,
"JOHN LENIGUS,
"JUSTUS WINTPERTE,
"DENIS MELANTHER."

The foregoing document, signed by eight of the first Reformers, stands before Christian Europe as a specimen of cant, irony, hypocrisy, malice, religious caricature, Scriptural gibe, ridicule of Christ, and impiety before man, of which the records of society have no parallel: and on examining the results likely to follow from the former bill of marriage with a wife's sister, in 1536, and of the present bill in reference to divorce, it will be found that Luther's doctrine in the extracts referred to could not produce more disastrous consequences on the moral frame of society than the legislation of England during the last three years on the subjects under consideration. The same tale can be told of all the Protestant countries of Europe: Protestantism has broken down by human laws the ancient sanctity of the marriage tie, has degraded the highest contract into a common market sale, has lowered the holy communion of the father and the mother, has polluted the tender seminary where the human race receive their first impressions from a parent's lip; and they have exposed by the temptations of law the most sacred intercourse to be tainted by crimes which cannot be published without shame. In a word, they have debated in public assembly on subjects which no Christian can utter without reproach, no gentleman can name without a blush in public or private society. Since the trial of the unfortunate Queen Caroline, there has nothing occurred in England so derogatory to the taste, the honor, and the conscience of the British Senate at the present shameful, filthy, adultery bill now under Parliamentary consideration.

D. W. C.
June 4, 1857.

MODERN NECROMANCY. (Translated from the Civita Cattolica.) (CONTINUED.)

The new doctrine, which we stated at the end of the preceding article which had been brought forward by an excellent periodical of Germany, with a view to explain naturally by magnetism the phenomena of the tables and of the spirits, is so original and so closely connected with our subject, that even apart from the quality of the authors of that periodical, for whom we entertain a great esteem, it may well deserve our attention, and we shall give a short account of it, and state our own opinion about it. It is contained in some article which the *Historico-political News*, of Munich, published in May and June, 1856. According to the author of these articles the recent wonders of American Spiritualism in the majority of instances do not depart from the boundaries of the natural order, although they touch its extreme limits, when it borders upon the supernatural. That if modern science cannot give any account of these things, and because she cannot persist obstinately in denying the truth of the facts, this shows either that she is false or imperfect—that is to say, that in the interpretation of the laws of nature she is at fault, either through error in regarding them in a very different light from the real one, or through ignorance, in not having yet arrived at discovering those sovereign laws, in which the key to all the phenomena is to be found. To remedy this defect of science, therefore, the author invites her to raise herself with him above pure matter into the region of spirit, exhibits to her the intimate connection which exists between the visible material world and the invisible one of pure intelligence, and hence bids to her in what manner those singular phenomena may be understood which she has been in vain labouring to explain with her old doctrines. We shall now briefly state the most salient points and characteristic natures of this new theory. The nature of man in the original perfection in which God created it and placed in Paradise, was endowed with faculties of a very much more splendid character than it possesses now since the corruption of sin; hence, if we wish to know the genuine and natural condition of man, we should not study it as it is, but as it was, in the happy spring time of its integrity and innocence. The spirit of man at that time not having yet become the slave of the senses, experienced an almost absolute authority and lordship over matter; and only where the members of his own body obedient to his will, but so also were external bodies without the need of contact and material impulses, the spirit moving them spiritually, as it moves spiritually the nerves and muscles of its organism. The power of sight naturally extended itself very far beyond the field of organic vision, penetrating by second sight so as to see occult and distant objects, where the eye did not reach. The soul at that time occupying the lofty grade which in the scale of beings belongs to it, and standing as it were on the confines of the two worlds, whilst on the one hand she exerted her empire over the material world, on the other hand she freely communicated with the world of pure spirits, who found the access to her always easy, and manifested themselves to her spontaneously—sometimes with internal voices, sometimes with external signs. But sin producing disorder in whole of man's nature despoiled it also of these gifts: which, though they are not entirely extinguished or radically destroyed, do nevertheless remain in a dormant and ruined condition. Not that they may not at least in part be sometimes reacquired; and this takes place whenever the soul of man, through whatever cause it may be, discharging itself as it were from its bondage to matter, approaches again to that state of liberty or rather lordship which it had at first; and returning to its true and pristine nature, takes up again its natural faculties and laws of operation. The causes which are able to produce this reintegration in men are two in number: the supernatural and the natural exaltation (*ascens*). Of the first we have luminous examples in the saints, in whom we thaumaturgic power was at least in a great part and indirectly the natural effect of eminent sanctity. Since in them the excellence of virtue by sublimating nature towards the integrity of its original condition, restored to it naturally that command over matter, that dominion over the elements, and over the beasts, that clearness of second sight, that easy commerce with pure spirits which were gifts naturally belonging to that condition. By this are explained (always naturally) not indeed all the miracles which are related of them, and particularly the most illustrious—such as the raising of the dead, and the instantaneous cures of inveterate diseases, and others of this sort, in which they acted through an extraordinary and quite supernatural grace, but so many other more common and frequent marvels, which on account of their being in them habitual, and as it were continual, show that they were almost become natural to their sanctity, or, rather, natural effects of humanity elevated in them by the supernatural grace of sanctity to its pristine excellency. The natural or mystical "exaltation" (*ascens*) is very much less efficacious, but however, it also is able to give back to man some part of those faculties which he possessed in Paradise, but which he lost with his first nature. It consists in various practices which tend to exalt mind above matter and to render its action more free and vigorous; such as, for instance, chastity, fasting, solitude, contemplation, the profound concentration of the intellectual faculties, and of the will upon an object, and others like these. There were not a few illustrious examples of this "exaltation" among the heathen, as for example, Apollonius, Pianeus, Iamblicus, Plotinus, Proclus, and others of the neo-Platonic school, who were remarkable for the wonders which they performed; and making all due allowance for historical exaggeration, what there was in them of really wonderful was the natural effect of nature being, so to speak, in the philosophers "transhumanated" by means of the exercises we have alluded to. Now to an entirely similar cause we must equally ascribe the marvellous power of the magnetisers and the mediums in our own day. It is the result of a natural exaltation, the practices of which are exactly that concentrated energy of will, that profound attention, that isolation of the mind from everything else, that power of command in the soul, that living faith in magnetism, and others of this sort, which are requisite as principal conditions for magnetising with efficacy. Magnetism is not, then, only a special force, but a new

state, in which the whole of man, with his forces and faculties, is sublimated above the vulgar condition of nature, and made to approach to that original excellency which he possessed in Paradise. In this new state he does not operate according to ordinary physical laws, but in obedience to the primitive laws of his nature in her virgin and incorrupt state, and he re-acquires (although but in part and for a short time only) the marvellous gifts and faculties of this condition. The most remarkable of these are—first, the faculty of seeing to a distance without the aid of organs, and through opaque bodies, the wonderful result of which faculty we see in the lucid somnambulists, after magnetism has been induced in them by the fascinating influence of the magnetiser. Secondly, the faculty of working at a distance, that is, by the command of the will alone, without the aid of organs, whether it be upon living bodies, as happens when a person magnetises another, without in any way touching him, or making the magnetic pass upon him; or whether it be on inert bodies, as are the tables which the mediums set in motion at their pleasure. Thirdly, the faculty of communicating with pure spirits, as are the souls of the departed, or the angels or demons. If we should wish to enter more minutely into the mode of operating of this faculty, we must penetrate into the most profound secrets of the life and nature of the world, the mystery of which will always perhaps remain inaccessible to man whilst he is journeying in this life. Nevertheless the two following considerations will assist us to form some conception of it. The first is this, that the subject and the object (that is to say, the man who operates and the external objects about which he operates; e.g., a table which moves), are not two terms so distinct and opposite as they are commonly supposed to be; but they have a very near connection the one with the other, a reciprocal influence which unites them with the harmony of the universal unity. For all things in this world are connected together, not only by extrinsic relations of neighborhood, contiguity and the like, but by the most intimate bonds of mutual in-existence so to speak; hence it is impossible that any modification whatever should take place in the subject, without a corresponding sympathy on the part of the object, and *vice versa*. Every affection of the human microcosm is immediately reflected in the macrocosm and in all its parts, in the same manner as in the human body the affection of one member is participated in and felt by all the other members, on account of the vital unity which unites them. Hence it arises that the action of the subject upon the object can take place not only by visible and external contact and in virtue of such contact, but even and that indeed chiefly by intimate and invisible influence, in virtue of their mutual and substantial in-existence. For this it is sufficient that the subject or man produce within himself that action corresponding to the effect which he wishes to obtain, and then that he direct and send on this action to the object, placing himself in the needful relationship with it. Such is the true law of nature, through which these faculties of seeing and operating at a distance, so far from being contrary to the natural order, are wonderfully conformable to it.—That common manner which we have of moving bodies by contact must be said to be a departure from this order; and this obtains in us because we are ignorant of the true nature of things, and because we are ignorant we do not practise those conditions, otherwise so easy and simple, which are requisite for the effect. This then is enough to enable us to understand in some manner how the two first faculties above mentioned operate. As to the third, which has reference to the commerce of spirits, we may just take notice that the world of spirits is not at all divided or distant from our own, nay, it penetrates it and intimately passes into it; and it is concealed from us only because our soul, buried as it is in matter, is not capable of feeling its presence or receiving its communications. But when the soul arrives at the power of unlettering herself though but a little, and by purifying herself re-acquires that clearness which naturally belongs to her (which can be done by the natural exaltation of magnetism), the spiritual world will immediately manifest itself to her, as we see in fact to be the case in the American necromancy. And this is an entirely natural thing, if by nature we understand not the present and ordinary condition of fallen man, but the primordial state of man in his integrity, restored partially in his physical faculties, by magnetism. Take notice, however, in the first place, that although the majority of the facts adapt themselves to a merely natural explanation, there are still some which seem to require a preternatural cause, that is an immediate demoniacal intervention; and, secondly, we must take notice that the facts themselves which are *per se* natural, may be, and are perhaps, caused very frequently by preternatural agents whose power not only equals but greatly surpasses that of man. Such is briefly the new theory proposed by the Bavarian periodical in order to explain in a natural way the wonders of the tables and spi-