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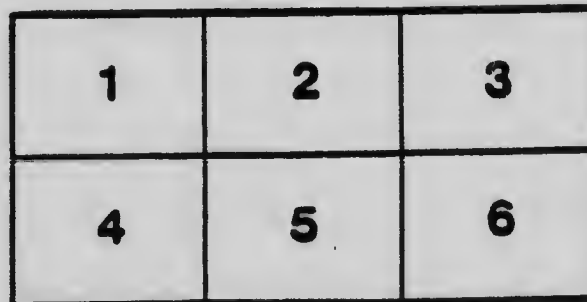
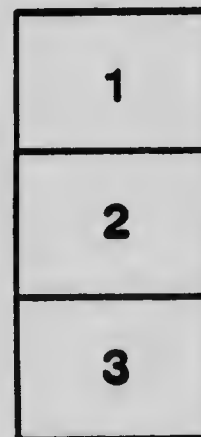
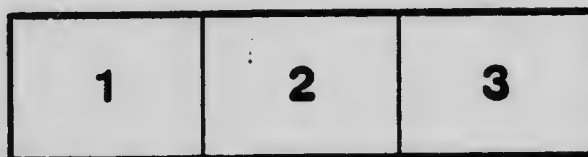
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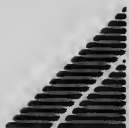
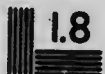
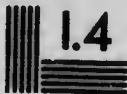
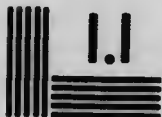
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Divorce in Canada

An Appeal to Protestants

BY

REV. JOHN J. O'GORMAN, D.C.L.



PUBLISHED DECEMBER, 1920

BY THE

THE CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY OF CANADA
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DIVORCE IN CANADA

An Appeal to Protestants

PART I.

THE SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT AGAINST DIVORCE.

An effort is being made to increase by legislation the facilities for divorce in Canada. At present in Ontario, in Quebec, and for all practical purposes in Prince Edward Island as well, divorce on account of adultery may be obtained only through a special Act of the Canadian Parliament.

On the 26th and 27th of April, 1920, the Senate of Canada passed two private bills to provide in Ontario and Prince Edward Island for the dissolution of marriage, by giving the superior courts of those provinces authority to grant divorce on account of adultery.* Whereupon the Legislature of Prince Edward Island unanimously passed a resolution opposing the establishment of a divorce court in that island, first, because the people of the province have not requested it, and secondly, because "the establishment of such a court will tend to destroy the stability of the home and encourage the dissolution of the marriage tie." That the Legislature of a province, which is half Catholic and half Protestant, and which in all its history has had only one divorce, should unanimously have passed such an anti-divorce resolution is worthy of note. In our own Province of Ontario, neither the people nor the Legislature has spoken. The Catholics of the province,

*These bills fortunately failed to pass the House of Commons. They were crowded out. The attempt will doubtless be renewed next year. Now is the time for the anti-divorce forces to canvass the legislators. Individually and collectively approach your Member of Parliament and get a pledge from him.

who form about one-sixth of its population, believe the dissolution of a valid and consummated marriage of two Christians to be impossible, except by death. This is the teaching of the Catholic Church, which she has maintained since the time of the apostles. It is found in Paragraph No. 1118 of the Code of Canon Law. But the decision will rest not with the Catholic minority, but with the Protestant majority. Protestants do not admit the authority of Catholic dogmas, nor the conclusive value of Catholic tradition. Their views on divorce are based on their interpretation of the New Testament and of the laws of ethics. In order then to appeal to the Protestant majority in the province on this question of divorce, we shall turn to Scripture and to ethics. I propose to show to those non-Catholics, who may read my words and weigh my arguments, that which happily many of them admit already, namely, that divorce is un-Christian, because opposed to the teaching of the New Testament, and immoral, because opposed to the laws of ethics, and that, consequently, not even adultery can justify it.

The Scriptural argument, which we shall first consider, must always be a decisive one with a Christian. If Christ legislated on this subject, those who profess themselves to be disciples of Christ, whether they be voters or legislators, must be governed by His laws. Now Christ did legislate on this question, and His authority is anterior and superior to that of the Canadian or British Parliament. Three of the evangelists and the Apostle Paul have recorded what he said. As non-Catholic scholars usually consider St. Mark's gospel to have been the first written, to it we will turn first. Lest anyone should think that my translation is tinged with Catholic theology, I shall cite the Protestant Revised Version. As a matter of fact the text of the revisers, in all the instances where divorce is dealt with, differs in no appreciable manner from the Challoner-Rheims version, except in one sentence to which we will refer later.

St. Mark devotes the following paragraph of his tenth chapter to Our Lord's teaching concerning divorce:

"And there came unto Him Pharisees, and asked Him,

'Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?' tempting him. And He answered and said unto them, 'What did Moses command you?' And they said, 'Moses suffered us to write a bill of divorcement and to put her away.' But Jesus said unto them, 'For your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of the creation, Male and female made He them. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh: so that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.' And in the house the disciples asked Him again of this matter. And He saith unto them, 'Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her; and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery.' "

By these words Christ taught that remarriage, subsequent to divorce, is merely legalized or illegalized adultery. Divorce, which was permitted to the Jews 1,000 years before, owing to their imperfect civilization and to avoid the greater evil which might have resulted from their hardness of heart, was now abolished. The Pharisees sought to entrap Jesus by placing him at variance at once with Moses and with the divorcee ruler in whose territory He then was—Herod Antipas. He answered by referring them to the God of Moses, to the institution of marriage recorded by Moses in the beginning of Genesis. The primeval unity and indissolubility of marriage Christ now restored, not merely for His followers but for all mankind, by laying down a principle which annuls in advance all divorce legislation, whether enacted by Emperors, Kings or Parliaments: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Remarriage after divorce, whether on the part of the man or of the woman, is adultery. No exception is made. The paragraph is clear and conclusive.

Our next witness is St. Luke. He condenses our Lord's teaching on the subject of divorce into one sentence: "Every one that putteth away his wife, and marrieth

another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth one that is put away from a husband committeth adultery." (16, 18). This sentence might well form a paragraph in the Revised Statutes of Ontario. The words are unambiguous, and, as in Mark, no exception is made to this prohibition of divorce.

St. Matthew treats of the question of divorce twice in his gospel, and each instance contains new details showing conclusively that divorce is no part of Christianity. The first reference to divorce is in the Sermon on the Mount. In that masterly outline of a moral code, Christ shows how His doctrine perfects that of the Old Testament. In every instance His doctrine is superior to the ancient one with which He contrasts it. One of these instances is the question of divorce.

"It was said also, whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say to you, that every one that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress; and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery." (5, 31-32).

This sentence is clear enough. Divorce was permitted by Moses; it is not permitted by Christ. Unfaithfulness on the part of the wife justifies separation, which does not expose the dismissed wife to become an adulteress, for she is one already. However, even after the dismissal, the marriage bond remains; for who marries her that is put away commits adultery. If the marriage bond remains for the guilty party it must remain also for the innocent party; for it is the same marriage that unites them both. The Sermon on the Mount abolishes divorce, as clearly as it abolishes the law of "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

There is but one other reference in the gospels to our Lord's teaching on divorce. It is found in the nineteenth chapter of Matthew, where we have a parallel account of the answer, already recorded by St. Mark. The paragraph begins as follows:

"And there came unto Him Pharisees, tempting Him and saying, 'Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife

for every cause?' And He answered and said, 'Have ye not read that he which made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh?' So that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.' "

Our Lord answers the casuistical inquiry of the Pharisees concerning divorce, by pointing to the original unity and indissolubility of marriage which He now restores. Marriage consists in the union of one husband and one wife as one flesh, a union made by God, and beyond the authority of man to break. Against this absolute anti-divorce legislation, the Pharisees cited the authority of Moses:

"They say unto Him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so."

The divorce legislation of Deuteronomy was but transitory. It was a temporary and tolerated deviation from a more perfect standard and was due to the moral hard-heartedness of the Jews. It was then that our Lord added a sentence which the defenders of divorce claim is a deliberate weakening of the moral standard which He had enunciated:

"And I say to you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery."

The first thing to note about this text is that its reading is uncertain. Three different readings of this verse are to be found in the best Greek manuscripts and the most ancient versions. It is the only marriage text of the New Testament the true reading of which is doubtful. The Latin Vulgate, the Greek Textus Receptus, the King James' Version, the text of the Revised Version and the mass of ancient authorities give it as above. A number of ancient authorities omit the second phrase or sentence:

"And he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." But the phrase was certainly said by our Lord, not merely in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 32), but also here, for St. Luke records it without a shadow of a doubt (Luke 16, 18). Despite its curious omission in some manuscripts of Matthew 19, 9, it is really an integral part of St. Matthew's text. St. Jerome, who made an exhaustive study of the Greek and Latin manuscripts of the gospels in the end of the fourth century, rightly judged this phrase to be authentic. Some excellent Greek manuscripts and early versions give a very interesting variant for the first part of this text. They word it: "And I say to you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress," literally, "maketh her to commit adultery." The meaning here, as in the Sermon on the Mount, where the same phrase is used is this: The dismissed woman, unless she be already an adulteress, is exposed to the occasion of this sin. Hence she should not be sent away unless guilty of adultery, in which case separation of bed and board is allowed. The marriage bond, however, remains, for "he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." (Matthew 5, 32; 19, 9; Luke 16, 18). So much for the variant readings of Matthew 19, 9.

The next thing to note about this text is that, if we accept the common reading, it is obscure. Fornication here, as in the prophet Amos (7, 17) means adultery. The verse has caused much difficulty to commentators, and various interpretations have been proposed. It is thus explained by Maldonatus: Our Lord in His first sentence deals with the case of the husband, in the second sentence with the case of the wife. As regards the husband, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and [whosoever] shall marry another, committeth adultery," the first by exposing his innocent wife to occasions of adultery (as already explained in the Sermon on the Mount), the second by his adulterous remarriage. The second "whosoever" is not expressed in the text, but is understood. As regards the wife, whether innocent or

guilty, "He that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." In other words; in no case is divorce allowed. A necessary inference is that a separation of bed and board only is permitted for adultery.*

It can freely be admitted that if we take this verse (Matthew 19, 9) alone, and make abstraction of the context, of the parallel passages, and of the tradition of the Church, little could with certainty be deducted from it. It is, however, unscientific to take the text apart from its context, or to ignore the parallel passages in St. Mark and St. Luke, or to ignore the tradition of the early Church as recorded by St. Paul and by the ante-Nicene Fathers. Now, these four authorities, the context, the parallel passages, St. Paul and the ante-Nicene Fathers, all teach in the clearest manner that divorce is not allowed, even for adultery, as we shall now proceed to show.

That the context, this very paragraph of St. Matthew's gospel in which this text occurs, condemns divorce absolutely is evident not merely from the general principles enunciated in the first part of the paragraph already cited, namely: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder," and, "But from the beginning it hath not been so"; but also by what follows:

"The disciples say unto Him, 'If the case of the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry.'"

This difficulty of the apostles shows clearly that they understood our Lord to have forbidden divorce even in the case of adultery. For otherwise we would be asked to believe that the apostles were so carnal-minded that they considered marriage inexpedient unless divorce were obtainable "for every cause." From this question of the apostles even Rationalist critics conclude that Christ condemned all divorce. In our Lord's answer to His disciples, the Revisers have curiously allowed a mistranslation of Tyndale's and of Cranmer's to remain in their text,

*That this separation from one's wife is not a divorce is expressly stated by St. Paul to be Christ's commandment: "If she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband." (I. Cor. 7, 11.)

namely, the phrase "All men cannot receive this saying." Our Lord's words were: "All men do not receive this saying."

If the context condemns divorce, so does, as we have already seen, the parallel passage in St. Mark. To those who believe in the divine inspiration and consequent inerrancy of the Scriptures, it is impossible that the gospel, according to Matthew, should have represented our Lord as enunciating a doctrine contrary to the doctrine contained in the gospel according to Mark and in the gospel according to Luke, and in a previous verse of St. Matthew's own gospel (5, 32).

St. Paul simply takes for granted the doctrine of the indissolubility, except by death, of Christian marriage. Thus in the seventh chapter to the Romans, he uses this truth, that remarriage of the wife during the life of the husband is adultery, to illustrate his teaching as regards the law. "Or are ye ignorant, brethren (for I speak to men that know the law), how the law hath dominion over a man for as long time as he liveth? For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man" (7, 1-3). According to this teaching of St. Paul to the Roman Christians, the wife can be divorced from her husband only by death.

In the seventh chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul treats of this question anew and teaches, as the doctrine of Christ, that Christian marriage is indissoluble, except by death:

"But unto the married I give charge, yea not I but the Lord, That the wife depart not from her husband (but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband); and that the husband leave

not his wife. . . A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord."

No commentary can strengthen, and no sophistry can weaken, the force of these words. Not St. Paul, but Christ himself, gives charge, that is, commands, "That the wife depart not from her husband, and that the husband leave not his wife." If, however, one partner leave the other, he or she must "remain unmarried or else be reconciled." The separation, which is here considered as in some extraordinary circumstances permissible, is one which is not and cannot become a divorce. It is a separation which has as its goal mutual reconciliation of husband and wife, for though separated, they shall maintain this relation: "Let her be reconciled to her husband." Later in the same chapter, St. Paul teaches that this command of Christ binds till death. "A wife is bound for so long a time as her husband liveth." Only after the death of husband (or of wife) is remarriage possible. "But if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will." It is then, the law and command of Christ, reported and repromulgated by St. Paul, that there is no divorce of marriage save by death.

There is, indeed, a Pauline privilege for certain Pagan marriages; but they have not the perfection of a Christian marriage which is a type of the inseparable union of Christ with the Church.*

This argument is developed in the fifth chapter to the Ephesians. The following is the paragraph in question:

"Wives, *be in subjection* unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ also is the head of the church, *being* Himself the Saviour of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ,

*Marriage even of Pagans is intrinsically indissoluble in the natural law. This law was repromulgated by Christ for all mankind. The exception mentioned by St. Paul (I. Cor. 7, 15) is in the nature of a **divine** exception in favor of the Christian convert when her pagan husband will not let her practise her religion in **peace**. The State has no authority to divorce pagans. ("Let not **man** put asunder.")

so *let* the wives also *be* to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself up for it; that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that He might present the church to Himself a glorious *church*, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife, loveth himself: for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; because we are members of His body. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh. This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church. Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and *let* the wife *see* that she fear her husband."

St. Paul in this paragraph is treating of the union which must exist between husband and wife. There is no union more inseparable than that of the head and the body. Only death can sever the head from the body: Juring life they are quite inseparable. Now Christ is the supreme "Head of the church, which is His body," as we read in the beginning of this epistle (I, 22-23). It would be outside the scope of this essay to show that this is not a mere figure of speech, but is one of the fundamental mysteries of Christianity. For the Incarnation is an alliance contracted, not only with the body and soul of Christ, with Whom the union is personal and unique, but also, through Him, with the bodies and souls of all Christians, both as individuals, and as a corporate Church. Hence, "we are members of His body" (V, 30). The church is Christ's *pleroma*, the fullness or complement of His body (I, 23). Christ is the Head, from Whom all the body, fitly framed and knit together, maketh increase. The work of the Church is the building up of the body of Christ, by extending the effects of the Incarnation, till we all attain the unity of the faith, and by doing the truth in charity grow up in Him who is the Head, even Christ (IV, 11-16). Leaving aside the question as to how this is, let us be content that it is. Christ is intimately

and unseparably united to His Church, as the head is to the body. Now according to the inspired word of God, the union between Christian husband and wife is like the union of Christ to His Church, is like the union of the head to the body. "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the Church." Therefore, the union between husband and wife is unseparable; therefore there is no divorce. The living head cannot be severed from the living body.

The same conclusion as to the indissolubleness of the union between husband and wife may be inferred from what St. Paul says of the obedience which wives owe their husbands and of the love which husbands owe their wives. This obedience and this love must be as enduring and as undissoluble, as the subjection of the church of Christ, as the love of Christ for His Church. Christ and His Church are "one body and one Spirit" (IV, 4), and husband and wife are "one flesh."

The evils which give rise to divorce can be remedied by wives being subject to their husbands in Christ and by husbands loving their wives in Christ.

A third indication in Ephesians that Christian marriage is indissoluble is found in its sacramental character which is here intimated by the Apostle: "This mystery (Greek, *mustērion*) is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of His Church" (V. 32). The word *mustērion* means more than a "mystery," it means a symbol containing a secret and sacred meaning, it means a sacrament, as the Vulgate rightly translates by interpreting. As the union of Christ to His Church is a source of holiness to the Church, which He redeemed, sanctifies, nourishes and cherishes, so its symbol, the union between the Christian husband and wife, is a cause of holiness to them. This is what the Catholic Church means when she teaches that marriage was raised by Christ to the dignity of a sacrament. He made the marriage contract to be a sign which is an instrument of grace to the contracting Christians. For the union with Christ is effected through grace, and unless Christian marriage conferred this grace, it would be but a vain and empty symbol of that union. Being an instrument of grace, how-

ever, makes it a great mystery, a secret and sanctifying symbol, a sacrament. Now as the union of Christ and His Church is abiding, so also sacramental Christian marriage, its true symbol, must be abiding. The fifth chapter of St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, therefore, not merely intimates the sacramental nature of the union between the Christian husband and wife, but it teaches that this union when consummated, when the twain shall become one flesh, is indissoluble. What is so clearly stated in the Synoptic gospels, and in Romans and First Corinthians, is implied also in Ephesians: "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

This completes the witness of the New Testament to the abolition of divorce. The early Christian Church knew no divorce, even for adultery. In the whole ante-Nicene period, there is not a single Christian teacher, Latin or Greek, who allows it, except the negligible and ill-informed Latin rhetorician, Lactantius. Thus among the Greeks, Hermas, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, all expressly state that re-marriage, even after the separation caused by unfaithfulness, is adultery. The Roman Emperors at Constantinople took over into their Civil Code from the laws of Pagan Rome divorce laws, and this is the origin of divorce among Christians. The Catholic Church repudiated these Roman divorce laws, and they never gained any footing in Western Christendom. In the East owing to the Erastianism and subsequent schism of the Byzantines, the civil divorce laws were gradually accepted and imitated by the bishops. Divorce was granted for quite a variety of reasons apart from adultery. In the West a few local councils and penitentials allowed divorce for adultery, but they were never accepted by the Apostolic See and were soon forgotten. Till Luther introduced divorce on the Continent (it will be remembered he permitted bigamy as well), the indissolubility of a valid and consummated Christian marriage was undisputed in Western Christendom. In England divorce was first introduced by the Royal Bluebeard.* Those Christians, the , who think that divorce

*The statement, repeated by the Majority Report of

is permissible owing to adultery, hold to this doctrine on the strength of the lax interpretation of an obscure text

the Royal Commission on Divorce (1912), that in pre-Reformation England "elaborate and highly artificial rules produced a system under which marriages theoretically indissoluble, if **originally valid**, could practically be got rid of by being declared null ab initio on account of the impediment of relationship," is merely a piece of Henry VIII.'s polemics masquerading as history. The impartial evidence is all the other way, as witness Henry VIII.'s own case. It is misleading for the Royal Commission to have incorporated this charge in its widely circulated Report, when Sir Lewis Dibdin, whom they quote, had after a personal historical investigation abandoned this opinion, as may be found in an obscure paragraph of the Commission's own Minutes of Evidence (Nos. 38932-3). Similarly when one of the Commissioners, Lord Guthrie, accused the mediaeval Church of subterfuge, Professor J. P. Whitney, of King's College, London, who was giving evidence, said: "There I should differ entirely. I know the statement is often made, but there are very few cases of the supposed subterfuges. My own experience would be that these cases are very few, and I should then, I think, agree with the opinion of the late Professor Maitland (Eng. Hist. Review, X. 760 f)." Minutes of Evidence, Nos. 39051-3. The evils which, however, did result from "clandestine marriages which the Holy Church of God for just reasons always detested and prohibited," and from "the multitude of impediments which," though intended to prevent certain types of sin and excessive intermarriage, "many times through ignorance led to invalid marriages, to persevere in which was sinful and to break which was scandalous," these evils, which the Council of Trent recites only to deplore and condemn, were put an end to in 1563 by the Tridentine marriage legislation (Sessio xxiv. De Reformatione Matrimonii). This reduced the extent of the impediments, ordered the publication of the banns, and required that marriage take place before the parish priest and two witnesses.

of doubtful reading in the face of the unanimous opposition of the very paragraph out of which it is taken, of the parallel passages in the gospels, of the thrice repeated witness of St. Paul, and of the teaching of the whole ante-Nicene Church. I ask, is that a safe thing for a Christian to do? Can it be seriously maintained that Acts of Parliament or decrees of Courts, such as we have here in Canada, which permit adulterers or adulteresses to re-marry, are in accord with the marriage legislation of Christ?*

There are seven paragraphs in the New Testament which answer in the negative. If we Canadians are to legislate as Christians, our Parliament should pass an Act declaring, in the words of the Civil Code of our oldest province, that "Marriage can be dissolved only by the natural death of one of the parties. During their lifetime it is indissoluble."

*It is worthy of note, that the Catholic Church considers the marriage of two baptized Protestants to be a more sacred thing than do Protestants themselves. These marriages are expressly exempted from the Catholic law against clandestinity. Whether contracted before a Protestant minister or a civil magistrate, the marriage is, according to Catholic teaching, not only valid and indissoluble until death, but a sacrament as well. Catholics hold that Protestants have two sacraments, the two that can be administered by lay persons, namely, baptism and matrimony. It is a Catholic dogma, that among baptized Christians the marriage contract and the sacrament are inseparable.

PART II.

THE ETHICAL ARGUMENT AGAINST DIVORCE.

The Senate of Canada has passed two private bills to legalize divorce for adultery in eight of the nine Canadian provinces (Quebec being predominantly Catholic is exempted), and to establish divorce courts in the two English-speaking provinces which lack them.* A review of the seven paragraphs of the New Testament which teach the indissolubility, except by death, of a consummated Christian marriage, forces one to the conclusion that the Canadian Parliament should rather pass an Act abolishing divorce throughout the Dominion. This sounds radical, but it is radical in the true sense of the word: it gets at the root of the evil. You cannot abolish sin by Act of Parliament; but you can avoid legalizing sin.

We are face to face with the fact, however, that many Canadians, both in and out of Parliament, do not recog-

*This appeal against divorce was first written early in June, 1920, before the fate of these Bills in the Commons was decided. Very recently, in the beginning of September, 1920, the Canadian Bar Association passed a resolution calling for a uniform divorce law. Because divorce courts are functioning under slightly different laws in six of the nine Canadian Provinces, the Canadian Bar Association wants these anti-Christian divorce courts established by "a uniform divorce law" in all nine provinces. Yet Ontario has shown no enthusiasm for such legislation; Prince Edward Island, through its legislature, has protested against it, and Quebec, by its very Civil Code, opposes it. Prince Edward Island has the power to establish a divorce court, but has never done so. It is but fair to add that the resolution of the C.B.A. was rushed through at the fag end of its meeting with only seventeen members present.

nize the binding force of supernatural authority. They consider that Parliament is as free to legislate on marriage and divorce as it is to legislate on any other contract, provided natural equity be observed. The more advanced wish to revert to the Pagan Roman idea that marriage may be broken by mutual consent, or even at the desire of one party, under certain conditions laid down by the State. Yet according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, "Christianity has had no greater practical effect on the life of mankind than in its belief that marriage is no mere civil contract, but a vow in the sight of God binding the parties by obligations of conscience above and beyond those of the civil law."

The Christian home or family is the cell of the social organism upon which the health of society depends, and Christ in healing society began by restoring to this cell its original purity, namely, the unity and indissolubility of marriage, and by adding thereto, a new vigor, sanctifying grace. To assert that Parliament is independent of religious authority in matrimonial and divorce legislation is practically a denial of Christianity. The civil effects of marriage are exclusively under the civil authority, but the marriage bond it cannot touch: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Those legislators who deny that revealed religion, or its author, Christ Himself, has authority to prevent their legalizing divorce, will, however, at least admit that they are bound by the laws of ethics, and that consequently they may not pass any law that is naturally unjust or immoral. To attempt to win over some of these persons to the anti-divorce forces, I will show that, independently of any supernatural religion, natural ethics proves marriage to be indissoluble, except by death, and condemns divorce as immoral.

Divorce is the dissolution of marriage during the lifetime of the parties. We are not now concerned with that partial divorce granted for adultery at the request of the innocent party, which consists merely in separation from bed and board. By divorce we mean the dissolution of marriage. Marriage may mean either the contractual act

by which man and woman become husband and wife, or the matrimonial state which results therefrom. We are here concerned with marriage as a state. In its loosest sense, which includes the most imperfect forms of marriage found in history, marriage may be defined as "A stable union of persons of opposite sex, made under contract, with a view principally to the birth and rearing of children." Nature, that is, the God of nature, has established sex for the continuance of the race and nature wills that the race be continued. This can be done only by a stable union of the sexes for the birth and education of children, and this is precisely what constitutes matrimony. Marriage, therefore, is necessary by natural law in the interest of the child, and through him, in the interest of the race.

The primary natural end of marriage is the birth and rearing of children. Without marriage, without the society which marriage constitutes, namely, the family, the child's life and welfare are not provided for, and the race would inevitably degenerate and decay. Individuals marry indeed for various reasons, for love, for position, for wealth and for many other motives, just as individuals eat and drink for pleasure or for company. Yet the chief need and cause of eating is to sustain the life of the individual, and the chief need and cause of marriage is to sustain the life of the race, by the procreation and rearing of children. The first law of marriage is then this: Anything opposed to the procreation and rearing of children is condemned by the natural law. Now divorce, that is, the dissolution of marriage, is opposed to the procreation and education of children, as I shall prove. Therefore divorce is condemned by the natural law.

Divorce is opposed to the natural law because by its very nature it dissolves marriage, and breaks up the most sacred and most necessary natural unit, the family. The following argument proves this by showing that nature intended marriage to be indissoluble, except by death.

The production and rearing of offspring is common alike to man and to animals. In the case of both it neces-

sitates an association of the male and female till the rearing of the offspring is fully accomplished. This argument is thus stated by the greatest of Christian philosophers, St. Thomas Aquinas, in his Summa contra Gentiles, Chapter CXXII.

“With all animals in which the female by herself does not suffice for the rearing of the offspring, male and female dwell together as long as is necessary for the rearing and training of the offspring. Now in the human species, the female is clearly insufficient of herself for the rearing of the offspring, since the needs of human life make many demands which cannot be met by one parent alone. Nor is this reasoning traversed by the fact of some particular woman having wealth and power enough to nourish her offspring all by herself: for in human acts the line of natural rectitude is not drawn to suit the accidental variety of the individual, but the properties common to whole species: A further consideration is that in the human species the young need not only bodily nutrition, but also the training of the soul. Other animals have their natural instincts to provide for themselves; but man lives by reason, which takes the experience of a long time to arrive at discretion. Hence children need instruction by the combined experience of their parents; nor are they capable of such instruction as soon as they are born, but only after a long time, when they reach the age of discretion. For this instruction again a long time is needed; and then, moreover, because of the assaults of passion, whereby the judgment of experience is thwarted, there is need, not of instruction only, but also of repression. For this purpose the woman by herself is not competent, but at this point especially there is requisite the concurrence of the man, in whom there is at once reason more perfect to instruct and force more potent to chastise. Therefore in the human race the training of the young must last, not for a short time, as in birds, but for a long period of life. Hence whereas it is necessary in all animals for the male to stand by the female for such time as the father's concurrence is requisite for the bringing up of the progeny, it is natural

to man, that the father and the mother should be for long years united in one domestic society. This we call marriage."

The argument in favor of the stability of marriage is thus continued by a contemporary philosopher, Rev. Dr. Michael Cronin, in his "Science of Ethics."*

"If a period of union between male and female is prescribed in the case of animals whenever their young require their common care, much more is such a union prescribed in the case of human parents, the capacities of the child being so much greater than those of the animal, whilst his power to attain the objects of those capacities without the help of its parents is so much less. Nature, therefore, requires a stable or abiding union, the sexes, and not a mere momentary or short-lived union, or a union lasting only as long as fancy and affection direct. Any such short-lived union would constitute a betrayal of, and a gross violation of, nature's requirements in regard to the child. The co-operation of the father with the mother is, therefore, necessary during the child's first years. The duty of caring for the child involves as much on the father as on the mother. The father is, equally with the mother, the cause of the child's existence, and, therefore, equally with the mother, he is charged by nature with the child's welfare. Since it was as one joint principle that they gave the child existence, as one joint principle they are bound to care for the child. Therefore their duty of caring for the child's welfare, is to be fulfilled, not in lives apart and independent, but in a single joint family life lasting as long as the right of the child to call to them for aid and guidance endures. Moreover, without the support of the father, both mother and child will, under ordinary conditions, find it difficult to survive. No accident of fortune or of condition can rid a man of his responsibility to his child and its mother.

"If the only end contemplated by nature in the institution of marriage, were the birth and rearing, by each

*Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son: Vol. II. Special Ethics (1917), pp. 385-460.

man and woman, of one child, then a father and mother would have fully discharged the duties imposed on them by the primary natural precepts by remaining together for a space of about twenty years after the birth of the child, at which age the natural period of tutelage is supposed to end. This would be the shortest period of time contemplated by nature in relation to marriage, and any sundering of the marriage tie before the end of that period would be impossible in natural law. But the birth of only one child does not represent the normal condition of the family, and it is by the normal conditions that the natural laws and properties of marriage are determined." Now, normally, it is to be expected that during the first twenty years of married life other children will be born, and that these nurture-cycles will be renewed at intervals as long as fertility lasts, on which account the marriage union must be continued till twenty years after the birth of the youngest child, or speaking more generally, till twenty years after fecundity has ceased. "Hence, normally, the primary requirements of marriage will not have been met before the parents reach the very advanced age of about seventy years. And since, as we said, the laws of nature are determined, not by what is exceptional, but by what is normal and ordinary, this is the least period contemplated by nature in regard to the marriage union. Marriage, therefore," concludes Dr. Cronin, whom we have been citing and summarizing so profusely, "is a union enduring by strict natural law up to the age of about seventy years."* The necessary conclusion which flows from this first principle is this: "Divorce, before the parents attain the age of seventy, is prohibited by the primary end of marriage—the good of the child—and is consequently impossible in natural law." No matter what sins against the natural law one of the parents may have committed in an individual case, the primary end of marriage remains unchanged.

*In some of the arguments which follow we have likewise borrowed from Dr. Cronin's excellent "Science of Ethics."

A consideration of the secondary end of marriage, the happiness and good of the parents, excludes divorce during the few declining years of life. First: A wife has a right in commutative justice to the support and fidelity of her husband to the end. To him she has given her youth, her beauty, her fertility, her whole life, as far as it could have any value for him. In return she must get love and protection for her whole life. "If he could send her away when she was advanced in years, he would do the woman harm contrary to natural equity." (Contra Gentiles CXXIII.)

Secondly: Love unlike mere sense attraction is lasting. As Aquinas put it: "The greater the love, the more need for it to be firm and lasting. But the love of man and woman is counted strongest of all, seeing that they are united for the sharing in communion of all domestic life, as a sign whereof a man leaves even father and mother for the sake of his wife. Therefore marriage should be indissoluble." (Contra Gentiles CXXIII.). To which may be added Aristotle's argument, given in his Ethics, that it is an inseparable characteristic of human love to claim the person loved wholly for oneself, to honor the person loved, and to desire a return of love equal to one's own. These principles exclude at once polygamy and divorce. "I love you," means "I love you until death do us part." Or, again to quote Aristotle, "Man and woman do not form a marriage for the sake of life, but for the sake of a perfect life."* This perfect connubial life is attainable only in a life-long natural society—the family.

There are not wanting other and minor arguments against divorce after seventy, such as the right of a child, at any age, to return to his parents for necessary assistance, and the right of the child to inherit the family property, both of which are difficult under the divorce system, but the arguments given are ample. After all, where divorce is permitted, it is obtained not after the parents have lived together for better or for worse for half a century, but during the early years of married life.

*Econ. I. c.3, 1, 43b., 18.

It will be sought as soon as possible in order to permit the dissatisfied parties to find other partners in life, if they so desire. Thus the children, if there should be children, will be left without the guidance of their father and mother during their tenderest years. Damages are sometimes claimed in the divorce court, but it is the child who pays.

Let me reinforce these proofs of the immorality of divorce, with the following argument of the prince of mediaeval and Christian philosophers, St. Thomas Aquinas:

“There is in the human species a natural exigency for the union of husband and wife to be one and indivisible. For the union of husband and wife must be regulated by law, not merely from the point of view of procreation, but also with an eye to good manners, or manners conformable to right reason, as well for man as an individual, as also for man as a member of a household or family, or again as a member of civil society. Thus understood, good manners involve the indissolubility of the union of husband and wife. For they will love each other with greater fidelity, when they know that they are indissolubly united; each partner will take greater care of the things of the house, reflecting that they are to remain permanently in possession of the same things; occasions of quarrels are removed that might otherwise arise between the husband and his wife's relations, if the husband were to divorce his wife; and thus affinity becomes a firmer bond of amity; also occasions of adultery are cut off, occasions which readily offer themselves if husband could divorce his wife, or wife her husband.” (Contra Gentiles CXXIII.)

St. Thomas lived in a civilization which knew no divorce, yet in his outline of Christian philosophy, written for non-Catholics, he did not fail to point out its intrinsic immorality in natural law. We, who are living in an age when divorce is inscribed in the law-books of nearly every country, should find it much easier to realise its inherent evils and disastrous consequences. Divorce is unjust, unnatural, anti-national and immoral.

It is unjust. When Parliament or court dissolves a contract, the rights even of third parties are usually sedulously guarded. But when the marriage contract is dissolved, the right of the first party, of him for whom marriage and sex exist—the child—is utterly ignored. He is deprived of his parents. A premium is set on the passions of the parents (as a reward of their adultery they may seek new mates), and a child is set out on the journey of life, fatherless or motherless, little better than a bastard. The effect of this stain on his education, character and career is incalculable. There may exist abnormal circumstances in individual cases where the child may seem to lose nothing by losing his parents, but nature frames her rules of life, and her canons of good and evil, on the usual and normal needs of humanity. It has been well said: "In comparison with the tragedy of the betrayal of the child at divorce, every other tragedy of the home shrinks into insignificance." Divorce is therefore unjust.

It is unnatural. What human law can break the natural bond between father and child, or between mother and child? A man-made law may take the child away, if the parent be a criminal, but it cannot take the parenthood away or destroy the filiation. It has as little real effect on those natural relationships as has a newspaper editorial. The relationship remains whether the law recognizes it or not. It is the same for the natural relationship by which husband and wife become one flesh. Unfaithfulness is a heinous sin against that natural union, but it cannot dissolve it. A criminal act cannot change what nature's laws proclaim to be a permanent relationship, resulting from the very nature of sex and from the object and end of the intercourse of the sexes in marriage. The crime may be punished but the relationship remains. Divorce is therefore unnatural.

It is anti-national. Not merely the child, but the race itself suffers from the dissolution of marriage by divorce, and it is primarily for the race, through the child, that marriage exists. The possibility of divorce leads to legalized race suicide. Those married couples who take into

their consideration the possibility of their future divorce are less likely to fetter their liberty by the burden of children. Divorce is therefore anti-national.

It is immoral. The possibility of divorce not merely leads at times to the unnatural offences connected with race suicide, which is unfortunately as common as tuberculosis; it also encourages the commission of those other crimes on account of which divorce is given. Divorce laws, despite the clauses against connivance and collusion, are to some people an incentive to desertion or adultery; and in all cases, the remarriage which divorce permits is merely legalized lust. Divorce is therefore immoral.

These are strong statements and plain statements; yet statements just as strong and just as plain are found in the Gospels. For from the whole series of arguments indicated above, it is abundantly clear that divorce, that is the dissolution of marriage, despite the annoying abnormal conditions which exist in individual cases, is intrinsically impossible in natural law, even for adultery. If natural law prohibits divorce in the case of adultery, it likewise prohibits it in the case of barrenness. This accidental and often merely temporary circumstance cannot change the nature of marriage: "For the line of natural rectitude is drawn not to suit the accidental variety of the individual, but the properties common to the whole species." Provided that husband and wife are physically capable of the marriage act, and this is a prerequisite to a valid marriage, barrenness is a mere accident. Moreover, if the parents cannot fulfil the primary end of marriage directly by begetting and bearing children, they can do so indirectly by adopting orphans. If orphans were adopted by childless parents, nature's economy would be restored and no orphan asylums would be required. While childless parents can thus attain indirectly even the primary end of marriage, they can attain directly the secondary essential end of marriage, the good and happiness which result from the mutual companionship of husband and wife. Nobly did Elcana the Aphraimite console his childless wife: "Anna, why weepest thou?

And why is thy heart grieved? Am I not better to thee than ten sons?" Man and woman form natural complements to each other. In the infancy of the race, God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone; let us make him a help like unto himself." That was the first marriage. The woman was given to Adam to be his companion, formed out of the bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh; wherefore a man shall cleave to his wife. These lessons handed down by divine revelation are seen to be based on the very constitution of our nature. Marriage is not, indeed, commanded to the individual, for an individual may consecrate himself to a higher cause more freely if he be unmarried (I. Cor. VII., 32-34), but it is necessary for the race. It is necessary for the race not merely for the propagation and rearing of children, but also for the good and happiness which result to man and woman when they unite in pure conjugal love. The love of man and woman for each other is one of the most fundamental instincts and emotions of the race. Nature cannot be wrong in constraining them to seek the completion of their desires in each other's company. This mutual perfection of lovers, however, can be accomplished only when they unite as husband and wife for a life-long companionship. To divorce that union because accidentally unproductive of children would be unjust and unnatural. It would be unjust to divorce the wife of one's youth, when her health and beauty begin to fail. It would be unnatural to break the indivisible union and relationship between husband and wife, for conjugal love, which they have pledged each other until death, unites their souls even more than their bodies. Unlike sense attraction, which is merely an animal instinct, conjugal love is life-long, increasing with the years. Husband and wife have accepted each other for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death. The fact that they are inseparably united to each other makes it easier for them to practise mutual forbearance and to stamp out in their inception those occasions of quarrels which, if the possibility of divorce loomed on the horizon, would sometimes lead to separation. Moreover,

if you allow divorce for barrenness you expose married couples to the temptation of utilizing contraceptives and illegal operations to produce artificial barrenness. Nor can you permit divorce for barrenness without permitting divorce for adultery. Once you have made one breach in the dyke which restrains human passion, a whole flood of evil will pass through. The good of society demands that all valid marriages be indissoluble by human authority. Hence the law of nature is seen to be the same as the law of Christ: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her; and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery." (Mark 10: 11-12.)

Moreover, once you allow "divorce for adultery" as in Canada, there will be a demand for divorce for insanity, for cruelty, for habitual drunkenness, and for desertion. No attempt is made to deny that divorce for these causes is unequivocally opposed to the plain teaching of Jesus Christ, the Author of Life. Of the more than one million divorces which were granted in twenty-one years in the United States, three hundred and ninety thousand were granted for desertion! Divorces in the United States now exceed one hundred thousand a year. Divorce for desertion leads to divorce for incompatibility of temper, and even to divorce by consent. Laws permitting divorce by consent, the old Pagan Roman idea, have in the last centuries actually been placed on the statute books of nominally Christian countries. Yet even the nation which permits divorce only on account of the crime of adultery is, in this respect, lower than those savages which repudiate divorce but allow polygamy. For polygamy, or the simultaneous possession of several wives, despite the fact that it puts the wife in an inferior position without pride or self-respect, atrophies all the finer human affections and seriously handicaps the future of the child, is nevertheless, not in itself so great an evil as divorce. For divorce, unlike polygamy, opposes the primary end of marriage, the procreation and education of children, and puts asunder the most sacred human unit—the family. Before our legislators grant the innocent wife—who may

not be innocent at all, but a perfect Tartar at home—the right to demand a divorce because her perhaps otherwise good husband, under the momentary influence of drink or passion, rashly commits the crime of adultery, would it not be well to reflect how frequent adultery is? It is, alas, as common a plague as influenza. Will Parliament pass a law condemning to the penitentiary for a period of years a wife or a husband convicted of adultery by a divorce court? This would be but slight punishment for the injury done to the State through the disruption of a Canadian family. Men are sent there for much less. If Parliament hesitate to send adulterers to the penitentiary, surely it should hesitate passing a law permitting adulterers, as a reward for disrupting an Ontario family, the right to remarry, that is to commit bigamy.

It is no argument to say that the Jews in the fourteenth century before Christ practised divorce. The rudeness and crudeness of their then civilization, far superior though it was to that of our pagan European ancestors who were then living in the Bronze Age, permitted both divorce and polygamy. But those evils, for evils they are, were merely tolerated by God to avoid a greater evil, as St. Paul teaches. "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked" (Acts 17:30). It was a case of "the passing over of the sins done aforetime in (the time of) the forbearance of God" (Romans 3:25, according to the Greek), that is, "an overlooking of," what in a more perfect state of society would be, "sins." "Sin is not imputed where there is no law" (Romans 5:13) either revealed, or "written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith" (Romans 2:15). There was no perfect law, either revealed or natural, known then to the Jews, because a very rude society could not bear such perfection. Divorce is indeed condemned by the natural law, according to which marriage is intrinsically indissoluble, but this truth was not perceived by the Jews, who, however, for centuries practised divorce but little, as they punished adultery with death. Will anyone seriously maintain that we are living under the marriage legislation of this Pentateuch and may stone to death the man or the woman guilty

of adultery or practise polygamy as did the pious King David? Yet the polygamy of David is less repulsive, and less opposed to the natural law, than the divorce of Deuteronomy.

Among the friends of divorce may be numbered the sentimental, the sensual, the followers of Luther, the doctrinaires, and the legalists. The sentimental consider some abnormal case where an innocent wife is ruined by a brute of a husband, or vice versa, and without considering the hundred-fold greater evils which result to society from the remedy they propose, clamor for divorce, and even for easy divorce. There is a great deal of loose thinking, of emotional appeal, of overlooking of essentials in divorce literature. The sensual wish divorce because the indissolubility of marriage is a check on the passions. Their ideal is purely pagan and depraved. Their medical history sheet, like their conscience, is not clean. The Lutherans are those who erroneously consider with Luther that Christ permitted divorce for adultery. Several Protestant sects in Canada hold this Lutheran view. The schismatic Greeks have held it for centuries. The doctrinaires see in the Family and in the Church the two institutions which oppose their dream of an omnipotent servile state. Hence they fight both by urging divorce, which at once dissolves the family and decays morals and religion. To this class, without however seeing the logical pagan outcome of their principles, belong the legalists, that is, those who think that the source of all law, other than that of voluntary associations, is the State. Lawyers very commonly fall into the error. Shyster lawyers favor divorce courts to get more business.

The supporters of divorce are active the whole world over. Every country has its divorce question, though, thank God, not all countries have divorce. The Catholic Church, both for revealed and rational reasons, is everywhere the consistent enemy of divorce. She would lose a kingdom rather than divorce a king. A higher law than hers forbids her, under any circumstances, ever to dissolve the valid and consummated marriage of two Christians. Nor will she ever recognize the attempted

dissolution of such a marriage by Parliament or court of law. Outside the Catholic Church the opponents of divorce, while they number multitudes of earnest Christians, lack organization, unity, and sometimes courage. The result is that a minority imposes divorce and thus wounds the womb of the race. If Catholics can get along without divorce, as they have for nineteen centuries, why cannot Protestants? The Catholic minority appeals to the Protestant majority to abolish divorce in Canada. Divorce, even for one cause, is no essential part of the Protestant tradition. Luther's divorce ideas did not everywhere prevail in Protestant Churches. In England, owing to the opposition of the majority of the Anglican bishops to divorce, there were less than six divorces in the whole of the seventeenth century. To-day in Canada, a minister of the Church of England in Canada is forbidden by legislation of the General Synod to remarry a divorced person. An increasing number of Protestant commentators, of both the conservative and liberal wings, hold that Christ abolished all divorce. This is the view also held by the recent 1920 Lambeth Conference of 252 Anglican bishops. A union of the Christian forces in Canada that are opposed to divorce is as possible as it is needful. Organize and educate! We are here concerned with the scriptural and ethical principles which preclude the possibility of divorce, and not with the manner of organizing the anti-divorce forces. One would, however, like to see the women voters of Canada interested in this, to them, vital question. Every Senator and every M.P. should be interviewed by his neighbors and his constituents.

The recent divorce debate in the Canadian Senate makes sad reading. Without any request or mandate from the people of Ontario, the Senate passed two private Bills, I and J, which would have established, had they become law, divorce and divorce courts in the Province of

*This would seem to be the view taken in South Carolina, a predominately Protestant State, where, as in Catholic Italy and Spain, divorce is not permitted.

Ontario, and a similar divorce court in Prince Edward Island. Just two days before the Senate passed its first Bill, the British House of Commons passed a resolution affirming, "Any change in the law that would impair the permanence of the marriage contract would be harmful to the best interests of the community." The Senate Bills are a change in the law which would impair the permanence of the marriage contract. **At present there is no divorce law, and there never has been one, in Ontario or Quebec.** The citizen of this former "Province of Canada" who desires a divorce for adultery, must seek to have a special law passed for himself alone.* The Senate proposed to establish a divorce court in Ontario, which would make divorce for adultery a right and not, as it now is, a privilege. That this would increase the number of divorces is affirmed in the unanimous resolution of protest of the Legislature of Prince Edward Island, and proved by the statistics adduced in the Senate debate. During the period 1906-1918, before the Prairie Provinces obtained, through a legal technicality, divorce courts, the number of divorces granted in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and British Columbia, where alone divorce courts were then functioning, was, proportionately to the population, over seven times greater than in the rest of Canada, where divorces were obtained only by special Acts of Parliament. It has been the same since Confederation. Establish a divorce court in Ontario and you may expect seven times more divorces. The lawyers who argue that getting a divorce bill through Parliament is at present the privilege of "wealth with its wines and wedded lusts," and beyond the means of a poor man, admit by that very argument that their object is to supply the decent laboring man with the same facilities for disrupting a family now enjoyed by the decadent rich. It is petulant for Senators to object to the number of applications for divorce by Act of Parliament. Let them refuse the appli-

*This was the law in England till 1857, and is still the law in Ireland. Ireland has less than one divorce a year, England and Wales had, in 1918, over 2,300.

cations, and devote their time to legislation which will build up and not undermine the social structure of our Dominion.

On this question of divorce we Canadians are like a man half way down a steep precipice. Unless we pull ourselves up very soon we shall inevitably fall down further. The only remedy for the divorce evil is total prohibition—of divorce. There are many who think that this is too high an ideal. The answer is an obvious one. Not merely the commandment against adultery (and remarriage after divorce is adultery), but the other nine commandments impose high ideals. Yet they are ideals which are and must be the law of our being. An application of the Ten Commandments and not an application for divorce is the remedy for unhappy marriages.

The law against divorce was repromulgated by Christ, not as a new law, but as a primeval law given in the infancy of the race. The command "What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder," is at once a law given by the Divine Founder of Christianity, and a law given by the Divine Creator of nature. It is a law which applies to Christians, Jews, and pagans, to lawyers and newspaper editors, to voters and legislators. It is a natural law observed by some of the most barbarous tribes in the history of mankind. Are we Canadians to have our moral sense so blunted, our moral vision so blurred, our moral decision so weakened, that we must have divorce, when the savages of the Andaman Islands, the aborigines of Ceylon, the Papuans of New Guinea, and other races just as barbarous, never tolerated it? In the name of God, let us unite to abolish divorce.

WHAT CATHOLICS DO NOT BELIEVE.

CATHOLICS DO NOT BELIEVE that mere confession of sin procures pardon; or that once confession is over nothing more is to be done. They do not believe that pardon for sin can be purchased for money, or that the Church or any one else can grant a license to sin; they abhor such blasphemous delusions.

Nor do they believe that sins can be forgiven in any way whatever, but by the grace of Jesus Christ in the bestowal of the Holy Spirit upon a truly repentant soul.

Listen to the Catholic Catechism of the Council of Baltimore:

Ques. Why did Christ suffer and die?

Ans. Christ suffered and died for our sins.

Q. What lessons do we learn from the sufferings and death of Christ?

A. We learn the great evil of sin, the hatred God bears to it, and the necessity of satisfying for it.

And again, about the dispositions necessary for the pardon of sins in the Sacrament of Penance, or confession, the most important being contrition and purpose of amendment:

Q. What is contrition or sorrow for sin?

A. It is a hatred of sin and a true grief of the soul for having offended God, with a firm purpose of sinning no more.

Q. What kind of sorrow should we have?

A. It should be interior—that is to say, it should come from the heart and not merely from the lips; it should be supernatural—that is to say, prompted by the grace of God, and excited by motives which spring from faith, and not by merely natural motives; it should be universal—that is to say, we should be sorry for all our mortal sins without exception; it should be supreme—that is to say, we should grieve more for having offended God than for any other evil that can befall us.

Q. What do you mean by a firm purpose of sinning no more?

A. I mean a fixed resolve not only to avoid all mortal sins, but also all persons, places, and things that may easily lead us into sin.

Once more, listen to what the Church teaches about Indulgences:

Q. Is an Indulgence a pardon of sin or a license to commit sin?

A. No, it is not a pardon of sin, nor a license to commit sin, and one who is in a state of mortal sin cannot gain an indulgence.

Q. How does the Church, by means of indulgences, remit the temporal punishment [that is to say, the pains of Purgatory] due to sin?

A. By applying to us the merits of Jesus Christ, and the super-abundant satisfactions of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the Saints; which merits and satisfactions are the Church's spiritual treasury. To gain an Indulgence we must be in the grace of God and must perform the good works enjoined.

Suppose the priest gives absolution to a sinner not truly sorry, do Catholics believe the sins are forgiven? No!

And if he have not a firm purpose of amendment of life, do they believe his sins forgiven by absolution? No!

Or if he is unwilling to make good the injury he has done his neighbor, does absolution avail? No!

And suppose he has not firmly resolved to avoid the persons or circumstances which cause him to sin, is the absolution good for anything? No!

And No! a thousand times to the base calumny which says that money is paid by Catholics for pardon of sin, or that any liberty to sin ever is or can be given by the Church or her ministers.

CATHOLICS DO NOT BELIEVE that the Blessed Virgin is in any way equal or comparable to God, for she being a creature, although the most highly favored, is infinitely less than God. Nor do they claim for her any power beyond that which she derives from Him; for she is entirely dependent on God for her existence, her privileges, her grace and her glory. What is said of her applies also as a matter of course to the other saints of God.

Strong expressions and loving words are sometimes used by Catholics in addressing these holy and heroic friends of Christ and they may be misunderstood. But the language of affection is not to be taken literally, as is seen in the case of love-letters and poems. The doctrinal statements of the Church are clear on this subject.

And now just think what it means to accuse us of paying Mary divine honors. It means that Catholics are idolators. Are you serious in making that accusation? Do you really believe that we worship false gods? Do you really believe that the vast majority of Christendom is a pagan sect? Are you really prepared to say that your Catholic neighbors and friends are idolators?

No doctrine is simpler than that of the Communion of the Saints in Heaven with their brethren still in this life. St. Paul gives it in Hebrews xii. 22: "But you are come to the mount of Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of Angels, and to the Church of the first-born who are written in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect."

Now this plainly means that all Christians, whether on earth or in Purgatory, or in Heaven, are really brethren, having the same Father, the same heritage, and a community of spiritual goods. So that the hosts struggling upon the rocky mountain-side in life's conflict, hand-to-hand with Satan, the world's temptings and the stings of the flesh; the hosts above them already at the gates, waiting, looking up, beckoning to their struggling brothers and sisters behind them; the hosts within the gates and upon the jewelled walls of the Heavenly City chanting their joyful triumph and looking down upon their beloved brethren and encouraging them by word and gesture—that all these are the one family of God Our Father, and whether in Heaven, Purgatory, or on earth can be and are in communication with each other, helping Christ to win souls to his eternal kingdom.

What! Don't you Catholics ever pay the Virgin and your saints the honor due to God alone? No!

But don't the ignorant people among you do so? No! None are so ignorant as not to know that there is but one God.

But don't you say things and do things which sound and look like divine adoration of the Virgin and the Saints? No! Not to persons who take the trouble to find out what we are about in our devotions: enemies of the Church will think evil of Catholics whatever they do or say.

CATHOLICS DO NOT BELIEVE in spiritual slavery. Slave! That is an ugly name. In comparing beliefs honest men should not call hard names.

Now the motto of the Catholic is thus: I will submit my judgment and my will to Almighty God alone. We submit to the Church because God has made her "the pillar and ground of the truth" (I. Tim. iii. 15). "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me." (Luke x. 16). The Pope is entitled to a Catholic's obedience because he holds the office of St. Peter, to whom Christ said: "Thou art Peter (a Rock), and upon this rock I will build my Church." And again: "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth it shall be bound in heaven; whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth it shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 18). Now tell me, is it slavery to obey an authority you know to be divinely appointed?

But can't the Pope teach you anything he pleases? No! He is bound by God's revealed truth, and by the many decisions of Councils and Popes who have gone before him.

But don't you really believe that the Pope is impeccable—that is to say, incapable of sinning? No!

But suppose that he ordered you to break a commandment of God, would not you be bound to obey him? No!

But do you not believe that the Pope is inspired? No! As supreme head of the Church he is preserved from error in the exposition of the revelation handed down by the Apostles.

But don't your Church forbid you to read the Bible? No! She exhorts us to read it daily.

CATHOLICS DO NOT BELIEVE that the Church has any right to assume political control, complete or partial, over this country or over any other country.

The Church is a spiritual society and the state is a temporal one. Listen to Pope Leo XIII.:

"God has divided the charge of the human race between two powers, the ecclesiastical and the civil, one set over divine things and the other over human things. Each is supreme in its own kind; each has certain limits within which it is restricter. . . . Whatsoever, therefore, in human affairs is in any manner sacred, pertaining to the salvation of souls or the worship of God and the like, belongs to the Church. But all other things, which are embraced in the civil and political order, are rightly subject to the state."— (Encyclical on the Constitution of the Christian State.)

Listen, also, to this declaration of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore:

"We claim to be acquainted both with the laws, institutions, and spirit of the Catholic Church, and with the laws, institutions, and spirit of our country, and we emphatically declare that there is no antagonism between them."

Is not the Church allied to despotism and set against Liberty? No! Notice Pope Leo's efforts in favor of the French Republic.

But wouldn't she persecute Protestants if she had the power? No!

Wouldn't she like to get political control of this country? No!

But isn't the Church trying to destroy our public-school system? No! She would like to improve it by making it more parental. Catholics are persuaded that parental rights must be carefully safeguarded in our public-school system.

Away then with all prejudice. Away with all blind hatreds and wholesale accusations. Away with the monstrous delusion that we are idolators, adorers of saints and of their dumb images; that we are the accomplices or dupes of intriguing and corrupt priests; that we pay money for the pardon of sin or purchase license to sin; that we hate the Bible, and are foes of liberty and intelligence and progress and humanity. We differ, indeed, from you in religious matters; but we know we are right and we can prove it, if you will only give us

FAIR PLAY.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

There are so many untruths and misrepresentations held against the Catholic Church; there is so much prejudice as in some cases to cause injustice and even bigotry, that any one who wishes may address, freely and without incurring any liability whatever, the Catholic Truth Society of Canada, 37 Bond Street Toronto, on points of doctrine, dogmas, practices, devotions, or teachings of the Catholic Church.

