

Edwin and Angelina

There is (says America) a Methodist clergyman in Chicago who is leading his sheep into strange pastures. This reverend shepherd casts a glance at the national scandal of divorce and decides that all is well with the Republic. The fact that polygamy is now an American institution fully sanctioned by the law, and tolerated by all the Churches, save one, does not disturb the sunshine of his Pollyannish mind. Off with the old and on with the new, is the motto of this progressive pastor. "Should two persons be compelled to live together," he asks, "when the affection which constitutes real marriage is dead?"

It is plain that the pastor considers this observation a very Achilles among all possible arguments, when, in fact, it is only a question, and a very silly question at that. "Affection" is something very beautiful, but it does not "constitute" marriage. Marriage is essentially a contract which binds the contracting parties to the performance of definite duties. A "loveless" marriage, if by the term is meant a marriage which is enacted for reasons of social or financial advantage, is, generally, to be reprobated. It is usually an unwise contract, but still a contract, as fully binding as a compact which is the outcome of unimpeachable wisdom and prudence. As for the marriage which is accompanied with all the outward signs of genuine love, it is true that the contracting parties cannot promise always to preserve the mellow haze which, traditionally, accompanies the honeymoon. But they can engage themselves to fulfil that which they have solemnly promised. If husband and wife were free to withdraw from one of the most sacred compacts which can be made, when its duties become more difficult, no promise would be safe, and the world would soon lose all ideals of truth, honor, and mutual confidence.

Fidelity, then, not affection or even love, and much less the brutal passion which often assumes the cloak of love, constitutes the firm bond of marriage. No one is obliged to marry, but everyone who deliberately enters into a solemn contract is bound to keep to its terms. Edwin will not long cherish close to his heart the little gleam of sunshine from Angelina's tangled tresses, and after a year or two Angelina will no longer burst into hot and sudden tears when Edwin sneezes. She will probably suggest a little quinine. A kiss is said by the philosophers to be a token of true affection, but by darning Edwin's socks and taking care of his collar-buttons, Angelina can give Edwin a deeper proof of her undying affection. Edwin will evidence his love by working hard to give Angelina, and after a time the little Edwins and Angelinas, a home and a full cupboard, and Angelina will demonstrate her devastating passion by taking care of the little ones about her knees, and most of all, by taking care of Edwin. There is no book-poetry in this connection, but much real poetry, for poetry, after all, means creation, and the creation of a home is an infinitely nobler poem than the creation of an Iliad. Best of all, the foundation of this domestic society is fidelity. And it is as harmful to society as to the individual to preach that fidelity is a virtue to be practised in fair weather and thrown overboard when the waves run high.

Hibernian Society, Waimate

The half-yearly meeting of St. Patrick's branch of the H.A.C.B. Society, Waimate, was held recently, the attendance of members being very satisfactory (writes a correspondent). The election of office-bearers for the ensuing term resulted as follows:—President, Bro. J. Hughes; vice-president, Bro. P. Foley; secretary, Bro. M. Cleary; treasurer, Bro. M. Healy; warden, Bro. E. Cullimore; guardian, Bro. T. Burns. During the previous term a goodly number of young men were initiated into the society. The branch is in a very flourishing condition, and always extends a real Hibernian welcome to new members. At a function held lately, Bro. Lyons was presented with a past-president's collar. In a happy speech Bro. Hughes referred to the recipient's good qualities, and characterised his work as of the highest merit. Bros. Toomey, Bradley, and Healy also spoke in glowing terms of Bro. Lyons' good work on behalf of the society. Replying in a reminiscent vein, Bro. Lyons spoke of the inception of the branch and its doings up till the present day. He thanked the speakers for their kind remarks, and said that it was a pleasure to know that

his work was appreciated. The success of the society, in the interests of which Bro. Lyons and other staunch sons of St. Patrick expended their time so liberally and worked so energetically, is assured.

G. K. Chesterton on Puritanism

Puritanism, it seems (says an exchange), was a 17th century Ku-Klux-Klan. Mr. G. K. Chesterton was taken to task recently in the English press for his dislike of the famous "May Flower" Puritans. His critics in the end were probably sorry they had spoken. This is the way he began his reply:—

"My critic tells me to read more about the 'May-flower'; and that is just the trouble. There are two kinds of reading about the 'Mayflower,' and I have some experience of both. I have read stacks and piles of Victorian history books, of text-books from Cambridge to Harvard, of leading articles, political speeches and professional lectures about Puritanism and New England and the voyage of the 'Mayflower.' I have also read just a little of what was said for and against such Puritanism in the Puritan period, in the contemporary records. By scholarly standards it was very little; but little as it was, it was enough to knock all the modern stuff to limbo. I defy anybody to read 17th century literature with a free mind, and not come to the conclusion that Puritanism was, as I said, a savage theological fury. But it was largely a fury against civilisation, and quite certainly against toleration. Puritans were indeed intolerant in very varying degrees and details of Puritanism. They differed very much among themselves. At one extreme was the Scottish type of fastidious fanaticism, splitting sects by splitting hairs. At the other was the English type of Cromwellian common-sense, content with a Puritan atmosphere, and anxious to secure able men from all groups of Puritans or even of Protestants. But taking the 17th century as what it was for all civilisation, the final war between the Catholic and Protestant elements in Christendom, there is only one fair test that we can take and only one possible issue of the test. It is that while Catholics and Protestants persecuted each other, there were some Catholics in favor of tolerating Protestants, and there were next to no Protestants, and certainly no Puritans, in favor of tolerating Catholics. The Puritans were simply a group of Protestants who thought that Protestantism did not persecute Catholics enough."

Why Not Try it Here?

We commend (says a Home paper) the following extract from an American contemporary to the notice of our readers: "Detroit has a judge by the name of Charles L. Bartlett, who appears to have some common sense and knowledge of human nature. Some motor-car drivers were before him, week before last, convicted of speeding. Before passing sentence, he bundled them all into a patrol-wagon, took them to a hospital, and made them view some casualties caused by carelessness and fast driving. Again last week, when another batch of seven came before him, he took them to the county morgue and exhibited to them the bodies of three persons who had been killed by motor-cars. Judge Bartlett seems to have some idea of the nature of law; he seems to know that the law can do little unless in co-operation with the reason and conscience of mankind, and he goes very sensibly about securing that co-operation. We feel pretty sure that those speeders paid their fines and served their sentences with an entirely different conscience than if he had not put them through that enlightening experience. Respect for law will revive as soon as Judge Bartlett's method is made general. People are apt to respect any law that can be made to engage their reason and conscience; and our present disregard for law is chiefly due to the fact that most of our laws are wholly arbitrary, and that neither reason nor conscience is concerned with them."

Eltham Catholic Carnival

Rev. Father N. Moore, of St. Joseph's Presbytery, Eltham, urgently appeals to all friends who have books of tickets, butts and money in connection with the Eltham Catholic Carnival, to return same before February 14.

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