

void and against 'God's law.'—null and void from the beginning,' says No. 99 of the Canons of 1603. But the 'dominant authority' spoke again in 1907, in the shape of an Act of Parliament. And now, throughout his great See, the Archbishop of Canterbury permits his clergy to solemnise, in the churches, marriages with a deceased wife's sister, and to admit the wedded couples to Communion. I pass no judgment on these facts, beyond expressing my conviction that the learned Prelate acted, in these difficult and delicate circumstances, in accordance with the principles of his faith and the dictate of his conscience. But here we have the converse of the puzzle which has got the Rev. Mr. Carrington down and worried him yesterday, marriage with a deceased wife's sister was null and void and against 'God's law'; to-day, an ordained representative of the same Church solemnly blesses such a union, seals it with the Communion, and pronounces it a true marriage 'after the ordinance of God,' 'joined together' by God, 'sanctified' and 'consecrated' by God—in other words, a marriage 'in the sight of God.' Will the Rev. Mr. Carrington find something 'immoral' and subversive of 'social morality' in all this? And if not, why not?

3. Till a certain day in 1753, marriages in England were valid before the Church and the spiritual courts, even though celebrated without banns and not in church. They were marriages 'after the ordinance of God' (as the Prayer Book says), and therefore marriages 'in the sight of God.' Even the objectionable 'Fleet marriages,' solemnised by 'couple-beggar' clergymen, were true marriages 'before God.' Then Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753 was passed. And thereafter (as from a certain Wednesday) marriages celebrated in the manner described above were treated by the spiritual courts as null and void, as not 'after God's ordinance,' and thereafter not true wedded unions in conscience and 'in the sight of God.' And the contracting parties were deemed to be free and unmarried. Is this 'immoral: and subversive teaching? And if not, why not?

4. The 19 George II., c. 13 (Ireland) rendered null and void any marriage celebrated by a 'Popish priest' 'between a Papist and any person who hath been or hath professed himself or herself to be, a Protestant at any time within twelve months before such celebration of marriage; or between two Protestants.' This act remained in full force till 1870. Several cases under this Act are before me—The Queen v. Taggart, and Kirwan v. Kirwan (in Hodges, Smith and Co.'s 'Digest,' pp. 539 and 1115), and the Queen v. Thomas Fanning (in 'Irish Law Reports,' vol. xvi.). In the last-mentioned case (tried in 1866) Baron Deasy, in giving judgment, expressly stated (pp. 313-4) that a marriage such as is described in this paragraph would, as a matter of course, be held to be null and void both by the civil and the spiritual court—the spiritual court being at the time that of the Anglican Established Church in Ireland. Here again we have a form of marriage, which was perfectly valid 'before God' one day, suddenly becoming null and void 'in the sight of God' the following day. Is this also 'a new moral law' and a subversion of 'the very foundation of social morality?' And if not, why not? And what becomes, in this connection, of the Rev. Mr. Carrington's 'principle,' that 'consent makes matrimony,' and that 'a man's pledged word has a sacramental value of its own, which cannot be made null and void'?

I must draw this letter to a close, but with much relevant information in my possession untouched. I may, however, refer in briefest terms to two further invalidating impediments accepted by the Anglican Church and its spiritual courts. (5) One of these was the rendering of all marriages of Catholics and other Dissenters null and void, as from a given date till 1835, unless solemnised by a Church of England clergyman in holy orders. The other (6) is the Royal Marriage Act of 1772, still in force. By its provisions, since a given day in that year, the mere refusal of the Sovereign's consent renders the marriage of a member of the Royal Family (with some exemptions) null and void, and no marriage 'before God' and 'after God's ordinance.' And the royalties so contracting are deemed to be unmarried before the Church and 'before God.' In one historic case this freedom was accepted, when the Prince of Wales (afterwards George IV.) took to himself a second bride 'before the Church,' while his first bride (Mrs. Fitzherbert) was still living. Do these two impediments annulling marriage destroy 'the very foundation of social morality'? And if not, why not?—Yours, etc.

EDITOR 'N.Z. TABLET.'

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## Presentation to Father Delany, Invercargill

(From our own correspondent.)

A large number of parishioners met in St. Joseph's schoolroom on Wednesday evening to bid farewell to the Rev. Father Delany, who had been in charge of Invercargill parish during the absence of the Very Rev. Dean Burke. Mr. J. Mulvey (president of the Catholic Club) occupied the chair, and the Very Rev. Dean Burke, Rev. Father O'Malley, Messrs. Woods, Morton, and Sims were also present. The chairman read the following address, which was artistically printed on satin, and beautifully illuminated, the work having been executed by the 'N.Z. Tablet' Company:—

'Dear Rev. Father,—In bidding you farewell on your departure from Invercargill, we and particularly the young people, with whom you have been so intimate, desire to express our deep sorrow at parting with you, and to place on record our appreciation of the great amount of spiritual and social good work performed by you during your comparatively short sojourn amongst us. The zeal and energy which you threw into your social work are largely responsible for the healthy condition of our various social institutions, particularly the Hibernian Society and the Hibernian Brass Band, and we are very grateful for your wise counsel, which was always cheerfully given, and also for the ready and practical sympathy which you invariably extended to every movement for the religious and social benefit of those committed to your care. You have endeared yourself to the hearts of the young people, and we would as your acceptance of the accompanying gift, as a slight token of our esteem and love. We all unite in wishing you God-speed, and trust that your labors will always be as fruitful as they have been here. We remain, dear Rev. Father, gratefully and sincerely yours in Christ; signed on behalf of the subscribers, J. Mulvey, L. W. J. Morton, D. Roche, J. Collins, J. Sheperd, P. Thorpy, J. Sims.'

The address was accompanied by a purse of sovereigns.

The Chairman and Messrs. Woods (president of the Hibernian Society), Morton and Sims, eulogised the work of Father Delany, special mention being made of the valuable assistance rendered by him to the many social institutions connected with the church. Their flourishing condition, it was pointed out, was due to the hearty manner in which Father Delany had co-operated with the congregation, and the sympathy and advice which he had always readily and cheerfully given. It was with feelings of regret that they parted with him.

Rev. Father Delany, on rising to reply, was greeted with great enthusiasm. He disclaimed credit for anything which he had done, and said that the real credit belonged to the Very Rev. Dean Burke, who had prepared the ground for him, and he had merely completed the work which had been started. The success of the various social institutions was due to the enthusiasm and zeal of the young people, and it was not only a duty, but a pleasure to co-operate with them. Father Delany also made special mention of the very valuable assistance which he had received from the Rev. Father O'Malley. He regretted very much having to say farewell, but expressed a hope that he would at some future date renew his acquaintance with them, and trusted that in the meantime, the church and the various social institutions connected therewith, would continue to prosper.

The Very Rev. Dean Burke expressed his appreciation of Father Delany's good work, and pleasure at the social progress made during his absence, making special mention of the formation of the Hibernian Society, which would be of material benefit to the district.

He went to the butcher; also the baker;

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