

IMPORTANT READING MATTER SELECTED FROM THIS WEEK'S NEWS FOR THE GUARDIAN'S SATURDAY SUBSCRIBERS

FRIDAY.

At his home at Guernsey Cove, on Thursday, April 20th, after a long illness, Daniel Machon departed this life in the 78th year of his age. A widow, one daughter and four sons and a large circle of other relatives and friends were present at the funeral.

At the home of her son, Frederick, White Sands, on Thursday, April 20th, after a few days' illness, Catherine, widow of the late George White, passed to her eternal rest in the 65th year of her age.

At the home of the bride's sister, Mrs. Joseph Dix, of 863 Mineral Spring avenue, Pawkicket, R. I., Rev. J. Lindh, pastor of Smithfield Ave. Congregational church, last evening united in marriage Percy J. Wilson of Cranston and Miss Margaret MacKinnon of Providence.

Entered into rest on the evening of 17th April after a lingering illness which he bore with Christian fortitude, Robert Campbell, an aged and respected resident of Victoria West, Lot 13, the deceased was born at Hampton, Lot 29, on the 20th February, 1821, and was in the 91st year of his age.

Being a strict and devoted adherent of the Church of Scotland, he died as he had lived, fully trusting in the merits of a Crucified Redeemer.

He is survived by a sorrowing widow, two sons and eight daughters, namely: John A., on the homestead; Frederick, in Eureka, Cal.; Mrs. J. B. Gardner, Mrs. Wm. J. Ellis, Northam; Mrs. Charles Enman, Victoria West; Mrs. Alex. A. Wood, Mount Tryon; Mrs. A. McDougall, Henderson, Maine; Mrs. J. E. Littlefield, Mrs. F. A. Rose, Block Island, R.I.; Miss Catherine, Brookline, Mass.; thirty-one grand children and three great-grandchildren who mourn the loss of a loving husband, a kind and indulgent parent.

A large concourse of sorrowing friends and relatives followed the remains to their last resting place on Friday, 21st, to the cemetery at Victoria West, where all that was mortal of an esteemed neighbor and friend were laid to rest to await the resurrection of the just.—Com.

Rev. Dr. G. M. Campbell, St. John, who is well known here and a frequent visitor to this Province, has been elected President of the St. John Branch of the Mt. Allison Alumni Association which was organized recently in that city.

Editor: Guardian.

Dear Sir: Judging by newspaper reports of the past few days the decree "Ne Temere" is receiving a very generous share of attention. Toronto and Montreal have been wrestling with it for about two months past and even such a serious body as the British House of Commons heard it briefly discussed.

Beyond some quite grave errors about some clauses of the decree both men showed a fairness which demands a fair answer. All Catholics must do admit that it may cause considerable trouble to the attacking party, however, do not see and do not admit that it may cause considerable good by preventing unions which they abhor as well as we.

The trouble arising 1st from hasty and mere verbal engagements; 2nd, from mixed marriages. The decree affects only engagements and marriages in which one part, at least, is Catholic. For Section XI No. 3, says: "Non-Catholics whether baptized or unbaptized who contract among themselves, are nowhere bound to observe the Catholic form of betrothal and marriage."

Both speakers told their hearers that before the Council of Trent marriage was only a civil contract. This is quite erroneous, for from the very first marriage was held by the Church as a sacrament and over sacraments the Church claimed and exercised supreme power.

Both preachers told their hearers that the Roman law declared invalid and down through succeeding centuries the Church claimed and exercised over marriage, rights which she never claimed over ordinary civil contracts. The civil contract idea of marriage is quite recent and not admitted by Catholic doctrine. It certainly was not the accepted doctrine of France at the time of the Council of Trent for the ambassadors of the French King requested the Council to declare null and void all marriages contracted without the consent of parents.

When Rev. Mr. Thomas leaves the decree and appeals to his audience he is not so admirable for the simple reason that he strives to pile up feeling against the decree rather than for it. His words read well and were they devoted to public good and peace would be admirable. "Our first charge," he says, "is that the 'Ne Temere' decree is the grossest intolerance." If he means that we are unwilling to tolerate the evil effects of mixed marriages and are from such intolerance endeavoring to obviate these evils, why impute to fault what he praised earlier? If by our intolerance he means that we are impatient of the views of marriage taken by many outside the Church I admit the charge and glory in it.

could enter a protest and delay or prevent a subsequent marriage. The impediment thus constituted caused much difficulty for the simple reason that engagements are very private matters and consequently very difficult of proof. To terminate this uncertainty and doubt as well as safeguard the woman, who generally is the injured party, the Church declares that in future no engagement will be held to constitute an impediment unless one of the contracting parties can produce a written contract signed by both the parties and by either the parish-priest or the Ordinary or at least by two witnesses. There is no official form for this written engagement and consequently Rev. Mr. Thomas should not have given in its place what is called the marriage agreement. That form of agreement is very old, has for centuries been signed by the non-catholic party before the marriage ceremony could take place—it came not with the "Ne Temere" but long before it.

In regard to the marriage itself one finds it hard to see why the provisions of the "Ne Temere" cause so much alarm or why the whole discussion is given the appearance of seeking justice for the people of Quebec. Before discussing the question Rev. Mr. Thomas should have consulted the will of Quebec. No complaint comes from 90 p. c. of the people of that province and yet they have been governed since the days of French power by the clause "Tamesti" of the Council of Trent and the force of that clause was just the same as the decree "Ne Temere." The civil law of the province orders its Catholic subjects to observe the formalities prescribed by the Church and the people of P. E. Island or Ontario have no reason to protest against the doings of the Quebec government.

Both preachers told their hearers that the "Ne Temere" decree is published in Germany and had recalled owing to difficulties. The facts are quite different. On January 18th '06 Germany was given the decree "Provida" whose rulings were not abrogated by the "Ne Temere"; hence in Germany since April 15th, '06 all marriages contracted by Protestant before ministers or state officials in the whole of the German Empire are valid. Two Catholics, however, to be validly married must give their consent before a priest and two witnesses and had the now-famous German law been placed in force the marriage would have been as invalid as in Montreal; because both parties were Catholic; for Article 1 of the "Provida" says that Catholics "may not contract valid matrimony among themselves save in the presence of the parish priest and two or three witnesses."

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Church's side of the story. Her purpose is to safeguard "the trusting girl" and meet the dangers of mixed marriages and the proper way not to do so is to advocate a professional Gretna Green.

Yours very truly, A. B. McDONALD, S. D. C. May 2nd. '11.

My second charge is that the decree challenges the supremacy of British Law. Would that mere fact be sufficient to condemn the decree? Catholics have frequently had to challenge that same supremacy. O'Connell often challenged it and was still a great man. Oliver Cromwell challenged it and is generally hailed a hero. Samuel Adams and George Washington challenged it too and are still lauded by a grateful nation. Hence we may conclude that this British Law is not a thing divine which cannot be opposed.

Does the "Ne Temere" challenge it? It does not. The courts of Quebec might be accused of challenging it, did we not know the laws of our land. The B. N. A. Act says in Clause 92: "In each of the provinces the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to matters coming within the classes of subjects hereinafter enumerated" and among such subjects No. 12 includes, "Solemnization of marriage in the Province." Quebec then is simply enjoying a privilege given her by the supremacy of British Law and the person who challenges it is not the Montreal judge or the Church but the Rev. Mr. Thomas who questions the power of the B. N. A. Act.

My third and last charge, he said, "is that the decree undermines the sacredness and stability of the home." This is a most serious charge with the Canadian Year Book of '08 can answer. British Columbia in which only 18 p. c. of the people are Catholic had in '01, 50 divorced persons for every 100,000 of its population. Ontario where Catholics only form 18 p. c. of the total people had 10 divorced persons per 100,000, while Quebec where 90 p. c. of the population are Catholic had only 3 divorced persons for every 100,000. We should remember that Quebec has always been under a law which binds as severely as the "Ne Temere" and that province is still generally credited with having the best home life in North America. Its constantly growing population is a living, moving, unanswerable response to Rev. Mr. Thomas' "third and last charge." Were my intent the proposal of remedies my first suggestion would be that the Quebec government might diminish the powers of the Rev. Mr. Timberlake by confining his activities to people of his own congregation. My intention, however, was to give the

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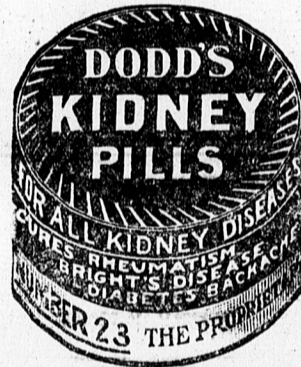
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