

**Sunday Reading**  
**Christian Marriage and Divorce.**

John, the beloved disciple, whose mother, Salome, appears to have been the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus, tells us where and under what circumstances Christ performed his first miracle. It was in Cans of Galilee, the birthplace and home of Nathanael, a little hill-town about four miles northeast of Nazareth, on the way to Tiberias. The occasion was a wedding, in which Mary, the mother of Jesus, seems to have had more than the interest of an ordinary guest, and to which Jesus and his disciples had been invited. The statement is, that 'Jesus was called' to the marriage. He was one of the formally invited guests. His disciples were not so called, but appearing with him, and with his permission, they were made welcome for his sake. There must have been more than ordinary intimacy between the bride's parents and the mother of Jesus, because we find Mary, who always appears as a retiring disposition, concerned about the comfort of the guests. In her perplexity she turned to her Son; and she evidently understood him better than some critics have done, who have read his reply as a sharp repulse. There was something in his tone that reassured her; so that she turned to the servants, and whispered: 'Whatever he saith unto you, do it.' And the water was turned into wine.

The incident evidently made a very profound impression upon John. For, after describing the Journey of Jesus to Jerusalem, and his return to Galilee, by way of Samaria, the evangelist says that Jesus came into Cans of Galilee, adding, 'where he made the water wine.' Nor does John leave us in doubt as to how the miracle impressed him. He speaks of it as manifesting the glory of Christ, as a breaking forth of his eternal and beneficent dignity.

The miracle revealed and illustrated his mission. He came to be helpful to men, to change the water of life into wine. But we should not overlook the gracious way in which this was done. He came to the rescue of his mother, and saved her from what would have been a very painful experience to her sensitive spirit. He came to the rescue of the guests, who praised the host not only for the abundance of the wine, but for its quality as the best wine of the feast. And, in doing all this, he placed a wreath upon the brow of the bride which has made marriage forever sacred. In the marriage service of the protestant episcopal church, the contracting parties and the witnesses are reminded that matrimony is an honorable estate, 'instituted of God in the time of man's innocence, which holy estate Christ indorsed and beautified with his presence and first miracle that he wrought in Cans of Galilee.' Jesus did more than ratify marriage; he adorned and beautified it by His presence and miracle. There is no record that during his subsequent ministry He was ever present again at a wedding. But to work his first miracle at a marriage feast, to which he brought his disciples, invests wedlock with a solemn and sacred pre-eminence. Groom and bride must have remembered it as long as they lived. The presence of the Chief Magistrate with his Cabinet officers would grace any wedding party. They would outrank all other guests. But their glory pales before the luster of him who lent the charm of his presence and the favor of his indorsement to the marriage in Cans of Galilee. It was a humble home, and they were but a humble pair who exchanged their vows and pledged their truth that day. Their names have not been preserved; their history is unknown.

That gives the presence of Jesus all the greater meaning, and warrants us in the conviction that his act was intended to have universal significance. It consecrates and makes Christian every altar of wedlock. He joins the hands, he gives the ring, he seals the bond with his benediction. We see him not, but he is there; the most radiant of all the guests the most eager of all who offer their congratulations. Alas for such as do not call him to the marriage! They miss the most gracious presence, they fail of the richest dowry. More precious than silver and jewels is the gift which he confers. It will make the humblest home a paradise. Happy, thrice happy are all who call him to the marriage; for if they call him he will come, and he will come as he did to Cans in Galilee, to change the water into wine and to manifest his glory.

In what our Lord said about marriage he emphasized first of all its sanctity. One need only read attentively what he regarded the Seventh Commandment as forbidding, to discover that he looked upon wed-

lock as fibered upon the purest love. Lust, Jesus declared, is adultery. It is hateful and wicked after marriage, in marriage, and before marriage. Between it and the love which constitutes true wedlock there is eternal and uncompromising warfare. Where love rules lust cannot come; and where lust rules love cannot enter. The doctrine is radical and revolutionary. It cut the root of all sensuality and crowns marriage with the white flame of holy affection. And because marriage is sacred the bond is indissoluble. Both parties leave their kindred and become one flesh, so that any separation of whatever nature is mutilation, as if one living body should be cut in two. This, Jesus said, was the Divine intention from the beginning and forever remains the law; for what God joins together no man may put asunder.

It is at this point that Jesus introduces his doctrine of divorce, in which he revises the Mosaic law, and runs counter to the universal custom of his time. Even his disciples were amazed at his teaching, and frankly said to him that, under his interpretation of what marriage meant, the unmarried state was the best. His doctrine, as reported by Luke, in the eighteenth verse of the sixteenth chapter of his Gospel, amounts to this: 'Once married, married for life.' And upon that statement of the case, the Roman Catholic Church has always refused to sanction marriage between parties, one of whom has been divorced. Marriage, that church maintains, can be dissolved only by death. No divorce is recognized as valid. There may be dissolution by special dispensation of the Pope; but this, it must be remembered, is regarded as the exercise of authority truly and properly divine. As the order of nature, both in the State and the Church, the marriage tie cannot be loosed; it must hold until death parts. And Rome cannot be gainsaid, so long as we read only Luke. When however, we turn to the first and earliest Gospel, we discover that Jesus said more than Luke reports him to have said. Turning to the tenth verse of the nineteenth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, we find that Jesus added an important qualification. He recognized adultery as good and sufficient ground for absolute divorce, with the right of remarriage by the innocent party; but he recognized no other ground for divorce. Through adultery, the guilty party commits moral suicide: and that moral death cuts the marriage bond. Even here, it is not asserted that divorce must follow upon adultery. The way is open for that, though other considerations may come in to make it unwise and even cruel. Divorce is one of the reserved rights of the innocent party in a such case; a right to be cautiously exercised. The surgery may be necessary and obligatory; but even then it will be surgery, leaving a wound which can never be healed. So, to, is remarriage by the innocent party treated as permissible; but it is not recommended. The undertone of the original law makes itself heard in the one solitary exception: 'Once married, married for life.' The great dramatist reminds us that it is better to

Than to fly to others that we know not of. It certainly would seem to be the dictate of wisdom, where marriage has proved to be so dishonorable in estate that divorce offers the only release, that another marriage calls for the greatest deliberation and caution. When it comes to such divorces as are freely given in many States upon the slightest pretext, often by mutual consent, and prejudiced testimony, they are without Christian sanction and should be frowned upon by all who place any value upon a pure home life. The doctrine of Jesus seemed a harsh one to his own disciples, and it is so regarded now. Then, as now, marriages were entered into hastily

**A TERRIBLE TIME!**

**A Port Hope Lady Undergoes a trying experience, from which she is at last freed by the use of Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills.**

Mr. F. J. ARMSTRONG, one of Port Hope's best known citizens, speaks as follows:—

"My wife has had a terrible time with her heart for the last fifteen months. The pains were intense, and she had a smothering feeling together with shortness of breath, weakness and general debility. Medicine seemed to do her no good, and we had about given up trying when she started to take Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills. They have toned her up wonderfully."

"She is stronger to-day than she has been for months, thanks to Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills. I am sure there can be no better remedy for their remarkable effects in Mrs. Armstrong's case."

**Laxa-Liver Pills cure Constipation, Sick Headache and Dyspepsia.**

and the haste was encouraged by the ease with which divorce could be secured. Make divorce difficult, and marriage will gain in dignity. Make divorce well nigh impossible, let it come under the universal social ban, and marriage will cease to be hasty and ill considered. When marriage is regarded as a covenant, and not as a secular or civil compact, the creature of fickle and changing legislation, as a covenant to become one, to live a common life and share a common fortune, we shall hear less of unhappy homes. The time to avert such a disaster is the time before the solemn vows are exchanged. After that it should be 'for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part; according to God's holy ordinance and thereto I plight thee my troth.'

There is one other saying of Jesus about marriage which commands attention. It bears upon the relation of marriage to the celestial and eternal life. Of that life he plainly says that marriage forms no part, but that the redeemed shall be as the angels of God. Marriage is the holy ordinance of God upon earth; it is not perpetuated in heaven. That does not mean, however, that the holy affections which organize the home, and which are cultivated in it, are to be exterminated, or to suffer eclipse. There is an eternal element in all that is transient; and when the husk vanishes of decays, the life is not extinguished. It takes on a nobler form, as does the oak which has its birth in the death of the acorn. Marriage is the cradle of the finest, sweetest, holiest affection. It is a school of gentler culture and of gracious forbearance. The years do not strip it of its charms. Poverty, sickness, age—these do not loose the silken bonds. And death cannot bury the holy friendships thus born and nurtured. They will outgrow their earthly forms and imperfections, but all that was true and good and noble in them, will blossom into brighter beauty in the realms where they neither marry, nor are given in marriage. It does not mean oblivion. They who have shared a common life on earth, mutually helpful and gladdening—husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters—cannot help entering into a deeper and larger and sweeter celestial fellowship, though the earthly relationship be not continued or resumed. We shall know each other. We shall love each other. If in the hour of holy wedlock we have laid deep and strong the foundations of mutual affection, confidence and fellowship, storm and tempest will not shake the house which we build upon them; and when death parts the hands, hearts will still be one, and hearts will remain one forever! In many a garret you will find an empty cradle. It is no longer needed. It was once the center of all that was sweet and tender. One by one, the children were rocked in it. But the boys and girls are men and women now. The cradle is discarded, but its former occupants remain the strength and beauty of a larger home. Marriage is the cradle of holiest love. We shall outgrow it, and leave it behind; but the affections which were rocked in it shall be our strength and beauty forever!

**Enhanced Blessings.**

Who is there that does not acknowledge that a blessing is enhanced by the fear of losing it, and that its value is never fully known till it is taken away? When wearisome days and nights are appointed us, we learn to prize the blessing of health. When pinched with hunger and cold, we duly estimate the blessings of food and raiment. It is, alas! when we are robbed of our friends that we fully realize how much we are indebted to God for them; and how much we owe for what still remains to us. Afflictions, then, are intended as the instrument of good to us. Afflictions, which by the grace of God we have rightly improved, are real blessings. They come indeed with a frowning countenance, but they bear a message of peace.

**It Grew too Cold.**

I saw once, lying side by side in a great workshop, two heads made of metal. The one was perfect; all the features of a noble manly face came out clear and distinct in their lines of strength and beauty; in the other scarcely a single feature could be recognized; it was all marred and spoiled. 'The metal had been let grow a little too cool, sir,' said the man who was showing it to me. I could not help thinking how true that was of many a form more precious than metal. Many a young soul that might be stamped with the image and superscription of the King, while warm with the love and glow of early youth, is allowed to grow too cold, and the writing is blurred and the image is marred.—Canon Teignmouth Shore.

**Ambition.**

Unless we possess a reasonable amount of ambition life becomes a burdensome monotony. We must foster some aim to attain success in certain directions or ex-

istence degenerates into morbid ruts from which it oftentimes is a very difficult matter to secure extrication. If we have been endowed by nature with any special genius, it is well to use every means to cultivate it for laudable purposes and thereby stimulate ambition to further its development for our human betterment. Nothing that has been given us by the all-wise Creator can be perverted into an instrument for our demoralization in any way, if we use it properly for Christian results. Even the much derided ambition to attain great wealth may be our passport to eternal salvation, if the use of the money gained is directed toward the amelioration of the poor and the suffering and the godless of earth.

**GREAT FAN COLLECTIONS.**

Howard Gould has a Fan that Cost \$100,000—Mrs. McKinley's Spanish Fan.

The finest collection of fans in Europe belongs to the Baroness James de Rothschild. The next most famous are those of ex Queen Isabella of Spain, who has over eight hundred fans of all periods and styles and the Dowager Empress of Russia, who is constantly adding to her treasury. Other noted collections are those of the Princess de Sagan, the Duchesse de Noailles and the Duc d'Aumale.

Mrs. Seward Webb, Mrs. Sloane, Mrs. Pinchot, Mrs. Pierpont Morgan and Dr. J. E. Emmet can display resplendant Venis Martin fans; fans with carved pearl sticks, inlaid with gold; fans with ivory sticks, inlaid with cameo emeralds; fans with tortoise shell sticks damascened with silver; mourning fans; wedding fans, war fans and fans which belonged to the illustrious queen.

In this country Mrs. Peter Marie possesses the most valuable lot of these fluttering trifles; Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt's collection ranks second. She has some painted by Leloir and Vibert.

One of the costliest fans in the world is Mrs. Howard Gould's, one of her engagement presents from her husband. Its price is said to be \$100,000. Its sticks are of perfectly matched ivory, and the mount is studded with turquoise and diamonds. When folded it is not as long as your hand and only half as broad as your palm.

The handsomest feather fan on record is that owned by the Countess of Lonsdale; it consists of five wide white feathers the largest twenty inches; the amber handle has her ladyship's monogram in diamonds. The bauble cost \$1,500. Of all her beautiful fans the Empress Augusta Victoria values most the one made of the feathers of a bird shot by her royal husband.

An ivory-stick fan riveted with diamonds, with a Maltese lace mount and much gold thread, is one of Queen Victoria's fans. It won the prize at a fan exhibition given in London, and at the close of the show it was presented to her majesty. It was made by a society with a formidable name—'The Worshipful Company of Fan-makers.'

Mrs. McKinley has a costly fan which formerly belonged to the wife of a Spanish hidalgo; it was given to her by an American citizen who two years ago spent some time in a Cuban prison. He selected the wife of the President of the United States to whom to make this valuable gift, because of the debt of gratitude he felt he owed for the efforts made for his release from prison.

A court lady of Munich has a collection of fans painted with scenes from all of Wagner's operas, and one on which are the signatures of all the diplomats who attended some famous congress held at Berlin. Countess Oriola has the most valuable autograph fan in the world; it has the autographs of all the royal family and the Berlin court, including those of Prince Bismarck and Count Moltke. A fan was painted to commemorate the signing of the treaty of Utrecht, and is of great historical interest. It belongs to Miss Furness, of New York.

Mme. Pompadour had a wonderful fan. The lace mount cost \$30,400, and it took several years to make the five sections, each one containing a medallion or miniature, which are so minute as to be almost invisible to the naked eye. It is now in existence, broken and apart, but still shows traces of its great beauty. In Mrs. Langtry's fan room, designed for her by Oscar Wilde, the greater number of fans are Dutch. The finest one of Christine Nilsson's collections of fans were given to her by the Thakore Sabib of Morri, and is made of gold gems and feathers. Another one is covered with diamonds, rubies pearls and emeralds. One presented to her by the city of Venice is of silver filigree and point lace. One of the choice bits of this collection, which is valued at \$50,000 is said to be the fan which Marie Antoinette had with her in prison and which she carried to the scaffold.

**Accommodating.**

'He only needs a little urging,' is a common phrase among us when somebody seems reluctant to push himself forward. A man is not always disposed to give another credit for his modesty.

When Garibaldi, the Italian patriot, was in London, his popularity was unbowed, and the crowd wished him to exhibit himself continuously. One particular noisy admirer of the general used to tell this story.

'I was in the Strand at the time, and the crowd was so thick that I couldn't even see his carriage, much less him. So I just balled: 'Stand up, Jaribawldi!' and bowed if Jaribawldi didn't stand right up in the carriage and let me see him!'

**Good Cheer! Courage Yet!**

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**OLD SOL'S RIDE IN 1849.**

Flowery Weather Prediction of the Journals of Long ago.

In these days of practical newspaper writing, in which bald facts are expressed in the plainest and tersest form, the flowery language indulged in by some of the 'journalists' half a century ago sounds peculiar. The following poetic convulsion was copied by one of the local papers from the New York Tribune in 1849 as worthy of a high place in the newspaper literature of the day.

'On Saturday evening at 17 minutes past 11 o'clock the sun rode calmly and mildly over the autumnal equinox and cast his anchor the wintry coast of autumn. But as yet the vast ocean of air through which he sails is glowing and transparent with the memory of the long summer days that have passed over it, darting their rich beams to its very depths. Even as we write, however, the remembrances fade, like the sky's blanching souvenirs of sunset, and in the distance the cold ghosts of winter glare and wave their frozen wings, which creak on icy hinges, while in the silence of midnight a prophetic voice of wailing and desolation moans artfully at the casement.'

Few people can contemplate this specimen of literary architecture without experiencing a feeling of awe and sadness, with a few cold shivers on the side. It is proof positive that the profession has in some things gained by what it has lost.

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