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REV. J. H. McDONALD VS. REV. FATHER CARNEY

To the Editor of The Daily Mail:

Sir,—I regret that an unavoidable absence from home of almost two weeks has prevented me from communicating with you at an earlier date with respect to the infamous Ne Temere decree, which still continues its home-wrecking mission throughout Canada. I am once again indebted to the good priest of St. Dunstan's for the privilege of throwing further light on the way in which Roman Catholic ecclesiastics ruthlessly proceed to break up homes when the Protestant party to a mixed marriage refuses to be re-married. But in view of the eminent father's last contribution I may be permitted a few preliminary observations before proceeding to my theme.

A SUCCESSOR TO MARK TWAIN.

In his former communications my inquisitor assumed to play several roles. He posed as a psychologist and as a specialist in ethical lore, but now he undertakes to play the part of a humorist, appearing before the footlights with cap and bells. He takes the public into his confidence and tells of his interchanges of jocular felicities with me on the occasions when we chanced to meet during the last ten years. Really this interchange is very funny. It is true we have exchanged pleasantries, and I might as well confess it, I have laughed more heartily at the pointlessness of his so-called jokes than at his witticisms. This, of course, was in my halcyon days, before "moroseness" overtook me; before the day when it began to be said of me: "He never smiled again." The nearest approach to real genuine humor which I have ever known to emanate from his fertile and facetious brain was when in his last letter he accused me of being "angry" and "irritable" under his "timely rebuke." That certainly is jolly. Everyone who read my communications from first to last with open mind, knows full well that my treatment of the man was almost playful. He thinks he discovers a word which could be interpreted to show a bellicose spirit on my part when I used the military figure of the "blank cartridge." With what literalness he seized at the metaphor, and tried to make my figure of speech reveal a warlike spirit. He might as well try to twist the sublime metaphors of the Apostle Paul in his swansong, "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith,"—making it appear that when the apostle to the Gentiles said he had fought the good fight, he was mad at Nero, when he exclaimed he had finished the course, he surely was a sport, and when he declared he had kept the faith, he must have claimed a monopoly upon religion. It is difficult to tell in what realm this versatile genius excels, whether it be as a moral philosopher, a mental philosopher, or as a humorist. A worthy successor of Mark Twain has appeared on the horizon, a star of the first magnitude surely!

BLIGHTED LIVES THE SUBJECT OF A JOKE

The jolly padre proceeds to give the public a sample of the humor with which he was wont to regale me in my happy days when I lived in the sunshine of his approving presence. He tells with self-laudatory delight how he refused to marry a young couple who came to him, one a Protestant and the other a member of his own flock and both under age. They sought out Rev. A. A. Rideout who tied the nuptial knot. The angry father of the young man appeared on the scene, heaps his gratitude on the priest of St. Dunstan's to whom he said: "You proved yourself a gentleman in the whole transaction, therefore, I wish to thank you." The father poured the vitals of his fury upon poor Mr. Rideout—"that scoundrel! I will make it hot for him and somehow them marriage began to be regarded as annulled. This is the kind of story with which he seeks to revive my drooping spirits and make the public smile with joyful approval.

Does not the whole recital savor strangely of the old story of the Pharisee and the Publican? Hear the pious parish priest say in effect—"I am so thankful I am not like other pastors. I refuse to marry couples under age, especially mixed couples. I give them good advice and I am especially thankful that I am not like that man Parson Rideout." And poor Parson Rideout, sweltering in Boston heat, dares not lift up his head towards heaven, but smites his emaciated breast and cries for mercy upon this scoundrel.

But let us see who is justified of these twain, the "gentleman" or the "scoundrel." The records of the Divisional Registrar's office shows that when the parties in question came before Mr. Rideout on the 21st day of June 1909 they both subscribed themselves as of marriageable age, as required in the marriage Act of New Brunswick, 63 Victoria, A. D. 1900, Section 9. How they became of age in travelling from the Rectory on Brunswick St. to the Parsonage on George St. I do not know. Perhaps they both imbibed the convenient teaching of the Roman Saint Adolphus Ligouri and so

found a way to cheat the unsuspecting minister. The marriage, perhaps, never would have taken place. I do not argue for a moment that it should. But I do unhesitatingly assert that with the knowledge the officiating clergyman possessed, the legal conditions so far as he knew them having been fulfilled, Rev. A. A. Rideout was perfectly justified in performing the ceremony and in the light of the civil law the marriage stands as valid. Who was the means of sundering the marriage tie does not appear; but it must be apparent all men that the man who would recite this sad story as a joke, with out an apparent thought of the two blighted lives, must be well nigh dead to the sacred meaning of that word "home." Indeed in another connection he tries to make appear that because a certain couple had no domicile in Fredericton they could have no home here. With him a house is a home. It does not seem to have dawned upon his mind that a house is built of wood, brick or stone, but a home is built of hearts bound together in love, and wherever that condition is fulfilled in a legal way, there is a home. And now it seems to me, as I recall the sequel of the great parable, that the "scoundrel" comes out of this sad episode justified rather than the "gentleman."

MORE RUINED HOMES.

Let me give the public through you Mr. Editor, a few more samples of the fruit of the Ne Temere tree. Here are three new cases which have come to me, vouched for by the most reliable authorities:

On the 5th of January last a clergyman of this city married a couple who came from Chatham. The groom was a Presbyterian and the bride a Roman Catholic. Soon after their return to Chatham a priest called at the home and announced to the young wife that she was not married and urged re-marriage rather than living in a state of sin. The Bishop also came to the house on the same errand, it is said. The husband, who believed in the validity of the marriage performed in Fredericton, held out against re-marriage. But a priest ultimately came to the home and the young wife left her husband, to whom his employer bears testimony—"a more decent man does not walk on the North Shore of New Brunswick."

In the town of Grand Falls there is living today a young woman employed as a domestic, supporting herself and her child. Her renegade husband is now married to another woman. The shocking story has come to me substantially as follows: A few years ago these young people lived across the American boundary line in the State of Maine. They kept company for a time and were married by a justice of the peace in accordance with the laws of that state. A child was born to them soon afterwards. They returned to New Brunswick, where a priest, knowing the circumstances of their marriage, took occasion to impress upon them that they were not legally married, and that the so-called marriage by a Maine magistrate was void. The husband, after a time, tiring of his wife, found the Ne Temere decree provided for him a way out and he was married to another woman not long since by a Roman Catholic priest on the upper St. John River.

Last summer there came to a Protestant minister at Grand Falls a young couple of French extraction. The young man registered himself as a Protestant, though he was brought up as a Roman Catholic, and the young woman was of the last named church. They were married in due and regular form by the clergyman, to whom they presented themselves with a license. One week after the marriage the clergyman received an urgent telephone message from the groom at Van Buren, anxiously inquiring as to the validity of the marriage. The inevitable priest was on their trail and declared they were never married in the true sense of the word. They produced the certificate of marriage signed and witnessed. The priest denounced it as worthless and threatened to have them arrested for living together. Hence the anxious telephone message. The minister assured them that the marriage was as legal as any performed in New Brunswick. The couple soon after moved from Van Buren. Not long ago another Protestant clergyman received a letter from a priest at St. Andre, inquiring if he had married the couple. It afterwards transpired that the reason of the inquiry was that one of the parties was seeking re-marriage, the home having been broken up meantime.

The clergyman who furnished me with the facts of the last case informs me that he can produce a dozen witnesses to show that the priest at Van Buren entered the home and endeavored to prove the invalidity of the marriage performed by the Protestant minister. It will require more ingenuity than Father Carney has yet shown to explain these cases away. The absurd pleas of "insanity," as in the Dalhousie case, and "cruelty," as in the Blackville case, will prove abortive to deceive the public, who are learning the wiles of Rome. The

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good Father at Blackville was careful not to tell the part the assistant priest played in visiting the home and making it what it has become.

It would be strange indeed if the Ne Temere did not result in ruined homes. Given three things—a persistent priest, an obdurate Protestant husband and a wife swathed with the swaddling bands of Roman tradition, where the home must be subordinated to the church, and there will inevitably be a breach in domestic relations. Or given a husband who tires of his wife and a church which honors the man who follows her decrees rather than be true to the obligations he assumed at the marriage altar, and again you have an open pathway to a desolated hearth-stone. The outcome is inevitable. I have been amazed since this discussion opened at the number of cases which have already occurred in our own small province. In some instances the husband had the courage to tell the meddling padre to keep away from his dwelling, and so such homes have been preserved. This is the plan the Italian government was obliged to adopt where, at the very fountain of the papacy, it is made a criminal act for a clergyman to interfere in domestic relations. Clause 174 of the New Penal code reads as follows: "A priest who, abusing the moral power derived from his office, incites to the setting aside of the institutions and laws of the state; or in any way to the neglect of the duties of the country; OR WHO DISTURBS THE PEACE OF FAMILIES, renders himself liable to fine, imprisonment and temporary or perpetual suspension from office."

Rome is seeking to fasten upon Canada what Italy, after a long and bitter experience, has put under the ban.

THE OROMOCTO AND PICTOU CASES

With respect to the Oromocto case, let me say that the information was given to me by a brother of the woman. He was a witness to the first marriage. He believes his sister to have been re-married as do also the other members of the family, and indeed the entire community. It was common talk at the time she became a Roman Catholic and he shared in the universal belief. It was with that moral certainty he first sent me a statement of the case and afterwards told me of it with his own lips. I may have been misinformed and, if so, I hasten to make amends honorable. The truth of the whole contention is so manifestly on my side that I would not take refuge in a mis-statement if I could, and my moral principles are such, that I could not if I would.

On the other hand I am not certain that the re-marriage did not occur. In a former letter Rev. F. L. Carney informs us that in a case of re-marriage the clergyman makes no official returns to the Divisional Registrar, so there is nothing whereby re-marriage can be traced. There are denials it is true, but then, according to the teaching of Saint Alphonsus, the denials may count for nothing. When one is asked in court, "Did you see a deed committed?" he can answer "I say no," which will be accepted by the judge as a denial, but with the witness means "I say the word no." It is on this ground that my informants with regard to the Pictou case, notwithstanding all the

(Continued on page four)

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