

clearly in the marriage service in the Book of Common Prayer?

If the State professes to break a bond between man and wife which Christ says cannot be broken except by death, can the profession of the State override the express statement of Christ in the opinion of those who call themselves Christians? The Western Church, of which the Anglican Church is a part, has always interpreted our Lord's words as being opposed to divorce for any cause — divorce, i.e., with the right to contract another marriage. The Eastern Church seems generally to have admitted divorce for one cause only. But the question really is this: Suppose divorce is permitted for one cause only, does that carry with it the right of re-marriage? There is nothing in our Lord's words, even in S. Matthew, in which the supposed exception to the indissolubility of marriage is mentioned, to sanction the modern theory of divorce, which means the complete severance of the marriage tie and the right to contract a fresh one. The supposed exception mentioned in S. Matthew's Gospel, and that Gospel only, refers in all probability to the nullifying of a marriage according to Jewish law for pre-nuptial sin discovered after marriage. Divorce as we understand the word and its connotation to-day is unknown to the writers of the New Testament.

In these days, when selfishness and comfort, and the avoidance of every scratch from the Cross, have become the popular gospel of the world, we can hardly be surprised that men and women eagerly snatch at the legal permissions to avoid suffering or self-sacrifice, without a thought of God, right, duty, the children, or the general welfare of society. Selfishness is killing idealism, and in no department of life do we see it more clearly than in faithlessness to the marriage ideal of Jesus Christ. Vicarious suffering is not a popular doctrine in the 20th Century.

Marriage to the Christian, however, is more than a legal contract; it is a sacramental rite, on which the blessing of God is sought and given, and those who accept the higher and truer view of marriage can have no dealings with divorce, or ever believe that man can put asunder what God hath joined together. The future welfare of society, the purity of home life, and

the exaltation of marriage, are all to a very large extent in the hands of Christians and Churchmen. They must uphold the standard of Christ at all costs; they must uphold the highest ideals, or the world will soon drift into a state of licentiousness, in which even human law will be ignored.

It is remarkable how many people, otherwise endowed with sound common sense, seem to have no conception of the Church's bounden duty to uphold the highest ideal of marriage. The Church is not a free agent in this matter; the clergy are not free agents, either. The Church cannot alter Divine laws, and the clergy certainly have no right to do so, even for the sake of gaining a little popularity and a reputation for broadmindedness. The Church is a steward, and the Bishops and clergy are under-stewards, and a steward cannot play fast and loose with his Master's property. If the Church, therefore, is compelled to refuse to celebrate marriages which are forbidden by the Bible and Prayer-Book, it is manifestly unjust for individuals to blame the clergy for doing their duty or the Church for upholding Divine ideals.

The law of the Church cannot possibly be affected by any human laws, and though we earnestly desire that the State should not legislate contrary to the teaching of Christ and His Church, yet our duty is perfectly plain, viz., "We must obey God rather than man."

(2) Second resolution—"That the clergy be informed that a marriage may be solemnized in any Parish after production of the certificate or certificates of the publication of banns, irrespective of the fact that such publication has not taken place in the Parish in which it is desired that the marriage should be solemnized."

This, of course, is only a detail compared with what lies behind the other resolution. Some uncertainty seems to exist in the minds of clergy and laity as to whether a marriage can be solemnized in a Church in which the banns of neither of the contracting parties has been published. Cases often arise, in towns more than in the country, where the prospective bridegroom resides in one Parish, the bride in another, and the wedding is to take place in a third. In such a case the banns would be published in the two Parishes in

which the contracting parties reside, certificates of publication would be obtained from the clergy of the two Parishes and presented to the Vicar of the Parish in which the wedding was to take place. The banns would not be read in such a case in the Church where the wedding was solemnized.

Bible in State Schools League.

Opponents of the Bible in State Schools League in New Zealand have made the statement recently that the Church of England in New South Wales is dissatisfied with the system of religious instruction in State Schools. The following letter from the Archbishop of Sydney will show how utterly without foundation such a statement is, and with it is printed a letter from Mr. James Hole, the Lay Secretary of the Religious Instruction Committee, followed by extracts from the 33rd Annual Report of the Committee submitted to Synod. It will be noted that so far from the report expressing dissatisfaction, it speaks in high terms of the system, and while recognizing the need for further efforts, testified to the fact that the clergy are doing their utmost in visiting the schools.

(Copy of letter from Archbishop of Sydney.)

Bishopscourt, Sydney,
Sept. 3, 1918.

Dear Canon Garland,—

The statement to which you refer with reference to the religious instruction in public schools in New South Wales seems to me hard to understand.

(a) The deputation who waited upon the Minister of Instruction was not in any sense dissatisfied with the value of its facilities granted by our Act, but on the contrary was so fully satisfied with the benefit to the public schools in which we are working that they desired to work also in the high schools, about which some had said that entry was not specifically granted by the Public Instruction Act.

(b) With regard to the statement that something occurred in the last Diocesan Synod which showed that religious instruction had