## DESERET EVENING NEWS: SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1904.

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### ERRORS ABOUT DIVORCE.

The subject of divorce has been discussed for some time by theologians, philosophers, statesmen and journalists, and is still in active controversy. It is of great importance to society, as it affects the integrity of the family and the home and therefore reaches to the very foundations of the state. To condemn divorce unreservedly after the fashion of the pulpit in modern times, is to take an extreme step, unwarranted by sound reason and a proper understanding of the scriptures which are commonly supposed to rurnish a posttive inhibition against divorce. We will endeavor in this article to correct a very widespread error, arising from a misconception of the teachings of the Founder of the Christian faith on this question.

The popular notion in Christendom is that Christ forbade divorce except for the one great offence-infidelity to the nuptial yow, the defilement of the marriage bed. But this is not substantiated by the scripture that is cited in its support. Read carefully Matthew xix, 1-12, which gives an account of the Master's instructions, elicited by a question from the Pharisees. The subject was not divorce on general principles, the right or wrong of it as might be determined judicialry, but simply whether the usage under the Mosale code was lawful, that a man might put away his wife "for every cause," by giving her "a bill of divorcement." The provision is found in Deuteronomy xxlv, 1. The answer of Jesus was simply in reply to that query of the Pharisees. He limited that right to the one capital cause. A man was not to put away his wife in that peremptory and arbitrary fashion, unless she was guilty of the great offense.

There is nothing in the entire narration of the Savior's remarks which justifies the conclusion, that he declared against divorce for reasons that demanded separation when so decided. upon evidence, by a proper tribunal. All the decrees of modern churches founded upon the notion that Christ forbade divorce except for the one are fallacious and absurd. It is true that the great Teacher showed the Divine purpose in giving the woman to the man as his wife "in the beginning." That was the ideal marriage. The parties given to each other by Delty were to be "one flesh." The first pair were immortal beings when they were so united, according to the account in Genesis 1. Man was not to put them asunder, because it was God who had joined them together, But their eternal union was predicated on their compliance with the conditions of holy wedlock, and it is unreasonable to believe that the Eternal Father wishes to force that which is practically impossible-a fusion of incompatible elements in a state of repulsion. It is nowhere stated in Scripture that God cannot or will not decree the separation of that which was joined under His authority. Christ, in giving His Apostles power to "bind on earth" and it should be "bound in heaven," gave with it authority to "loose on earth' and it should be "loosed in heaven" (Matth. xviii, 18). Persons married under the Divine law by divine authority were made one under conditions agreed upon. If these were violated, the same authority could loose the bonds, and it would be God who put them asunder as much as it was God who joined them together, and not man. The old custom of the times in which the Mosaic law was observed, that was discussed by Jesus and the Pharisees, is and has been for centuries obsolete. Men are not permitted to "put away their wives" in that fashion nowadays, even for the offence named. A divorce has to be obtained by legal procedure and a decree of a court. Ecclesiastical law regulated this matter for centuries. Marriages were performed under the ceremonies of the church, which claimed to exercise divine authority, and divorces were given under very rigid restrictions by ecclesiastical courts. In this country and in these times, marriage is regarded as a civil contract, and therefore the civil law regulates divorce, It is man that joins, it is man that puts asunder. As to the grounds on which divorce may be properly granted there will be, doubtless, some differences of opinion. If the matter is regulated by Divine authority, it is likely to be wisely, justly and properly adjudicated. The marriage ceremony is then divinely ordained and performed by God's ministers. If the covenants and conditions thus entered into are violated, the same authority can determine whether the contract may be annulled, because of the "hardness of heart" or culpable conduct of either of the parties render. ing the union insufferable or wrong to be continued. If civil courts are to pass on the question, statutory grounds for divorce will be decided upon as a basis for decrees, and they ought not to be of a trivial character.

DESERFTEVENING NEWS trary notwithstanding, the rule that forbids divorce except for the one vile is monstrous in its cruelty and ice. Quite recently a savage of a husband deliberately brandd burned his wife horribly, for leged offence, the proof of which not forthcoming. Should she be o the wretch for life with no prosof relief but death? Ought an al drunkard whose cups incite o violence on wife and children. rmitted to hold terror over them for life? Should a patient, tolling woman continue to wear her life away with a lazy, improvident scamp who will not try to furnish his family with common necessaries? Is it right to compel a pair who cannot dwell together in peace, be the fault where it may, to drag out a wretched existence of discord and perpetual strife? Should women be forced to bear children under

such conditions and people the world

with quarrelsome degenerates predisposed to evil? We fully agree with the view that the primary source of the evils existing is improper marriage. Passion rules too often in the union of the sexes. Liberty of choice runs to extremes in these days. Parental guidance and the voice of authority are ignored, and rebellion against them is encouraged by popular sentiment and current literature. This needs correcting. But taking society as we find it, is it not far better to permit divorce, regulated by law and judicial decree, that to put up the arbitrary and senseless bar sought to be interposed, against the separation of the improperly mated and the right to marry after divorce, and thus perpetuate evils grevious to be borne and needless in the light of common sense? We are not blind to the evils of easy divorce for frivolous reasons, nor to the consequences of the disruption of families; but at the same time we do not close our eyes to the wrong of attempting to bind together with galling chains, men and women whom neither God nor man can make harmonious or fit to associate in matrimonial relations.

RUSSIA'S WARS.

While waiting for definite news from Port Arthur, and while guessing at the final outcome of the war between Russia and Japan, it may not be without interest to recall the fact that Russia, since the days of the first Napoleon. has only had two wars of any magnitude, and both were prompted by the religious sentiment of the people. The Crimean war grew out of a dispute between Russia and France concerning the right to a protectorate over the sacred places in Palestine. This is to Russia an important question; for the Russians every year congregate there, in large numbers, to worship and observe certain religious ceremonies, and if their privileges to do so were curtailed, or abrogated, they would consider that a calamity worse than famine, or the plague. It is necessary to consider the power of superstition, if one will account for the Crimean war. But to the solicitude for the so-

called holy shrines was added a demand for protection for Christians under Moslem rule. That war lasted for two years. It was finished on the Crimean peninsula. On this was situated the great fortress of Sebastopol. The Russians blockaded the harbor by sinking their Black Sea fleet, and the slege dragged on with the variations afforded by the charge at Balaclava, and the flerce battles of Inkermann and the shine. Malakhoff. The garrison finally set Sebastopol on fire and retreated to a fortified position on one bank of the harbor. The war closed shortly afterward with the treaty of Paris. The second war also had a religious motive. In 1876 the massacre of several thousand Bulgarians by Turkish soldiers led to a demand for reform by the powers which Turkey resisted. Russia thereupon advanced an army into Bulgaria on the way to Constantinople. The Turks made a desperate resistance at Plevna, where 18,000 Russians were killed or wounded in a day's fighting. With Pievna captured and a Russian army almost within sight of Constantifight. nople the sultan negotiated the treaty of San Stefano, uniting most of European Turkey with Bulgaria as an indeness. pendent state. But England feared him. that the new state would become a Russian dependency. Intervention was threatened and the settlement was finally effected by the treaty of Berlin. "Pike? which deprived Russia of most of the fruits of its victory, and gave Turkey renewed license to murder and plunder. Since then Russia has endeavored to gain strength by consolidation and expansion along the lines of industry and commerce. Will the present war stop her progress in this direction, or will it end in making her a world power, such as history has never before seen? That

where in the houses of the wealthy and I titled persons, 'clothed in fine linen and faring sumptuously every day,' talking unsavory society scandal with as much easy glibness as any dissolute 'lay' decadent that ever cozened another man's wife away from the path of honor in the tricky disguise of a 'Soul?' What of the spiteful, small-minded, quarrelsome little 'local' parsons, who, instead of fostering kindness, neighbor-liness, good-will, and unity among their Instead of fostering kindness, neighbor-liness, good-will, and unity among their parishioners, set them all by the ears, and play the petty tyrant with a domi-neering obstinacy which is rather worse than pagan, being purely barbarous

"And if the word 'pagan' be used at all, should it not be particularly and specially applied to those theatrical dignitaries of the church whose following of the simple and beautiful doctrine of Christ consists in sheer disobedience to His commands—disobedience open-ly displayed in the ornate ritual and 'vain repetitions' which Christ ex-pressly forbade? Disloyal to both God and the King, the 'pagan clergy' are doing more at this present day to in-jure the cause of true religion among the masses than is any lack of zeal or want of faith that may exist in the people themselves. Who can blame sensible men and women for staying away from church when, in nine cases out of ten, they know that the officiat-ing minister is less Christian, less en-lightened, less charitable and kind-hearted than themselves?" His commands-disobedience open-

The article is interesting because it discloses the fact that Miss Corelli entertains views concerning the clergy similar to those held by a host of prominent literary leaders, among whom may be mentioned Victor Hugo, Tolstol, Bjoernson, and Ibsen. It is a sad fact that the clergy of our day are cutting a sorry figure in the estimation of the men and women foremost in the intellectual field. Miss Corelli must have been laying in wait for an opportunity of unburdening her mind on this subject, for otherwise the harmless reference to London as "pagan" would not have caused this thunderstorm.

It is a curious fact that a British church man, the bishop of Ripon, has said virtually the same as Miss Corelli, though in more polished terms. According to the Manchester Dispatch the bishop, in his visitation to Bradford Parish church, said no Christian man

could feel happy or satisfied with the religious conditions of our times. The London census of attendance at places of worship showed that 82 per cent of the population never went to any place of worship; and if they followed those who went to church, he was afraid they would find they did not display any signs of deep spiritual earnestness. The feeling with which some went away from a place of worship was that of irritation and regret of having wasted time.

The bishop continued and explained that this indifference was not towards religion, as such, but towards the formal and ordinary expressions of religious faith and worship. Doctrinal statements, he said, no longer appealed to the great mass of laymen. Church services in this non-theological age were still obtrusively theological. He thought, considering the enormous resources at the command of the church. that none of them could be content with their output of moral energy. That comes pretty near laying the

blame on the clergy, as Miss Corelli does. Only the bishop's hand is encased in silk this time, while the lady shakes a "mailed fist" at the church.

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be slient, and how to put his knowledge in practice.

When Richard Mansfield was introduced to President Roosevelt at the White House he said: "Mr. President, I---- " Mr. Roosevelt at the same moment exclaimed: "Mr. Mansfield, I----" "The I's have it," gravely remarked a mutual friend, and neither of the famous men knew just whether to laugh or be offended.

"The Hon, Samuel W. McCall, in his Phi Beta Kappa address, speaks disrespectfully of the scrappy paragraph," says the Boston Herald. The Hon. Samuel W. McCall can have all the scraps over the "scrappy paragraph" he wants. By the way, who is the Hon. Samuel W. McCall? The paragraphers, who hear of everybody, have never heard of him.

# ON RELIGIOUS TOPICS.

New York Evening Mail. We believe it was Longfellow who sang of the Sabbath:

O day of rest; how beautiful, how fair, How welcome to the weary and the old; Day of the Lord; the truce to earthly care.

The poet, it is needless to say, did not live anywhere around Greater New York. He certainly could not have found yesterday, ineffably beautiful as it was, and pre-eminently worthy to be called the "bridal of earth and sky," either a day of yest or a welcome space It was, and pre-eminently worthy to be called the "bridal of earth and sky," either a day of rest or a welcome space of time for the weary and the old. A wild west "shoot up" at the Harlem market, with bullets, fired by the "dock gang," perforating the houses in the neighborhood; a crowd of boys in a wild riot on a Ninth avenue clevated train, necessitating a call for the po-lice reserves; the violent dragging of 500 people, men, women and children, who thought a city ordinance had given them a right to ride to Coney Island for five cents, from the cars of two railroad companies by hired "bounc-ers," while a great crowd, including the police, looked on; and all day long a vast uproar of exploding freemackers and pistols in the streets-these and other disturbances scarcely left this particular Sabbath the right to call it-self "sweet day, so calm, so bright."

#### The Interior.

The duty of the moment for any one who in this generation would carn the good conscience of a conservator of the republic, lies in such efforts as he may be capable of, toward convincing the American people that our prevalent small corruptions, small disorders and small awbreakings do-actually, and not as a tenuous and fanciful theory-put in peril the perpetuity of the na-tion. The public mind must be taught to apprehend that the hour of riot in the street is not simply a passing dis-turbance with a few men killed, but a real and possibly permanent deirac-tion from the nation's ability to make its citizens safe in life and rights. Popgood conscience of a conservator of the Its citizens safe in life and rights. Pop-ular thought must be enlightened to think of the night of corrupt bargain-

think of the night of corrupt bargain-ing in the council chamber not as the inconsequential enrichment of a few rogues, but as so much destruction done to those principles of fair dealing to interdependent society. And these things gone, where will be our vaunted institutions? The people must some-how be aroused to understand that in these slight robheries committed here these slight robberies committed here and there, now and then, upon the fundamental store of ideas with which the fathers set up this matchless gov-ernment of freedom, the whole invalu-able wealth may be filehed away from us before we are aware.

The Standard.

The standard. One of the most important questions to be settled in connection with be-neficence, its growth or decay, concerns the measure in which present day be-neficence is Christian. In a large sense it is all Christian, for it is all the pro-duct, directly or indirectly, of the re-ligion of Jesus Christ. This we gladly recomplex, and in it we relote. Again,



is the question to be decided by the present contest. In this connection it may also be of interest to recall that in 1868 a spiritualist is said to have published a volume in which he predicted the downfall of Russla, and the triumph of Japan. The prediction is quoted in the Boston Transcript. The forecasts are somewhat hazy, but remarkable in the light of present events.

## A FURIOUS ATTACK.

An English archdeacon, Rev. Sinclair, has referred to London as a "pagan city," and this seems to have awakened the wrath of Miss Marie Corelli, the famous author. She writes an article in an English paper, in which she furiously attacks the clergy. "It is quite easy," she says, "to say 'Pagan London,' but what if one spoke of pagan clergy? What of certain eccleclastics who do not believe one word of the creed they profess, and who daily play the part of Judas Iscarlot over again in taking money for a new betrayal of Christ?"

The article is quoted in the Manchester Chronicle of June 22, and is, in part, as follows:

"What of the ordained ministers of Christianity who are un-Christian in every word and act of their daily lives? What of the surpliced hypocrites who preach to others what they never even try to practise? What of the countless vicious and worldly clerical bon-vi-vants, who may be met with every The clergy of Christendom to the con- I vants, who may be met with every- I a suspension to the sector states and the sector states



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