

By the action of the house of lords, article 11 in the English church prayer book's table of kindred arranged wherein whoever are related may be married in scripture and our law is forbidden in scripture and our law is to marry," is struck out and a man is given both the sanction of the law and grace both to marry his wife's sister, or the child to marry his wife's sister. A man may her husband's brother, and it is a peculiar fact that this relation is quite different to the relation between a man and the sister of his deceased wife. So far as kindred is concerned, the two are identical, but

the sentiment with which the unions are regarded is not the same.

AN OLD DISPUTE.

The matter which is thus settled has been in dispute ever since the reign of Henry VIII., the defender of the faith having frowned these marriages. The law passed at the instance of Henry was understood to mean that the union of a man with the sister of a deceased wife might be invalidated; and it was not until 1855 that the unions were void in fact. Since Lyndhurst's time it was not restrictive, and recognised marriages made previously while it proscribed them for the future. It is

held that at this time the understanding was that the law should be repealed the next year, but these expectations were never realized.

In 1841 the "horned life" endeavor to have the lords repeal the act, and the next year the commons defeated it similar bill by a narrow margin. In 1847 a royal commission was appointed to inquire into the rights of the commons. The result was another bill, introduced by the commons in 1849 by Sir Wm. Sturt Wortley. This bill passed its second reading, but did not reach its final stages. Next year, in 1850, the commons introduced a bill, introduced in 1851, Lord St. Germans introduced a bill, but the commons defeated it. In 1855 the commons again assented to the bill, but the lords remained obdurate. Since then the measure has been introduced several times, but always the lords have thrown it out. Sometimes, too, the commons assented, but usually approved. There

was no change in the lords, even in 1879, when King Edward, then Prince of Wales, introduced the bill. On that historic occasion the vote was 101 against to 51 for.

THE DEBATE IN CANADA.

Until 1882 the law in Canada was as the law in England previous to the act of Mr. Cameron of North Carolina. (I know Mr. Justice and father of Sir Percy Grouard introduced a measure to make marriage legal with the deceased wife's sister. It was seconded by Mr. Cameron of North Carolina and eloquently argued by them both. The opposition to the measure was based primarily on scriptural grounds, it being held that Leviticus xviii. 18 and xxi. 17 forbade the marriage. The very best of the opposition, however, declared the interpretation put upon these passages to be far fetched and unreasonable.

The fact that the Church of England prayer book forbade the marriage was held to be due to an incorrect translation from the original Hebrew. It was shown that the Jewish law actually forbade the marriage. In short, the case was made convincing on the grounds of scriptural interpretations.

The objections founded on social grounds appear to have been more formidable, if less concrete. Nobody was able to arise and plainly state them, but there were many vague and mournful allusions to the deplorable conditions that would result in families where a man's sister-in-law was domiciled and his wife living. After all the chief difficulty was found in the fact that the Roman Catholic Church disapproved of the marriage and had the Church of England forced them. The house hesitated

take a step that might be construed as an affront to either of these bodies. Difficulties were also encountered in the marriage laws of Nova Scotia, which were based on the British act, and which it was not in the power of the dominion government to amend. Finally after great tribulation, the bill worked its way through the house and into the senate, and the bill was passed. That there has been any harm done as a result, there is no evidence to show.

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