

to be 'incestuous'; they are also condemned by the Table of Forbidden Degrees bound up with our Prayer books. The Bill contemplated, without abolishing the Canon, would compel a clergyman of the Church of England to give his church for the solemnization of such marriages. The Bible certainly teaches us to believe that a man and his wife are 'one flesh,' and therefore the man who would marry his deceased wife's sister, is marrying his own flesh. It is for this reason the Church condemns all such unions as in themselves of the nature of 'incestuous' unions.

Southern Churchman:

We mistake if we fancy no impression has been made by the appeal of English speaking Bishops anent unity. Never before has so much been said and written on the subject. Not that any one sees his way to it; the difficulties are great and many; but the very fact that Christian people are thinking on the subject is what gives hope. Only the other day, the Presbyterian Record of Canada, gave forth its thoughts remarking: 'The problem of Christian union seems likely to find its solution in the foreign field. Christians at home do not realize the wickedness of sectarianism, nor feel the need of united forces and united action as do those who are called to apologize for the divided Church in the face of perishing heathen.'

The Church News, St. Louis:

In a late Forum Dr. Briggs, Presbyterian, has an admirable article on 'Church and Creed,' which, with the exception of confusing the formulas of modern religious bodies with the Creed of the universal Church, might have been written by a thorough going Churchman. His closing words are worth thought in the present disquietude: 'In this period of transition there is need of patience, charity, courage, sound judgment, and at the same time passion for the truth. There are some who would do away with all creeds. To those we reply that the Church has had creeds from the beginning. It must have them to express its faith, life, and unity. The excesses committed by the modern Church in all its branches ought not to drive us into opposite excesses. Let us correct the evil, remove the error, and make no more mistakes. Let every Christian rally to the position of the Anglican Church that the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed are sufficient.'

AMONG items of art interest, travelling through the press, we recall nothing more noteworthy than the following from a recent New York paper:

Another interesting curio now on exhibition at the Exchange of Woman's Work, is a bit of stone picked up on the roadway leading to the summits of a mountain overhanging the village of Oberammergau, by a lady, just after witnessing the Passion Play, and which bears a striking resemblance to the face of Christ as printed by the Old Masters. The stone was in her possession for eight years before the lady (Mrs. Bacon) discovered the lines of the sorrowful face revealed when the bit of limestone is held at a certain angle. The State geologist and assistant State paleontologist pronounce it, after a careful examination under powerful lenses a natural formation containing a pathetic and exact portrait which requires no effort of the imagination to trace. Prof. J. S. Newberry of Columbia College, pronounces it genuine and not fashioned by art, and Bishop Doane, Bishop Potter, and other well-known men consider the resemblance striking and unmistakable. The lady wished to exhibit the stone for the benefit of charity, and a little corner was found for her in the Exchange, where many visitors gaze with silent wonder at the familiar face cut by the hand of nature in the pebble.—*Church Work.*

VULGAR ERROR No. II.

"ONE CHURCH IS AS GOOD AS ANOTHER."

Do you think so? Then it follows that one religious "persuasion" is as much or as little to be trusted, and as much or as little to be maintained as another. Therefore schism is no sin, and there is no such thing as distinctive truth to be maintained, or destructive error to be avoided. There is no definite faith, no visible Church, no spiritual guide.

If this be true now, it was true always. Was it true in the days of God's ancient Jewish Church? Jeroboam the son of Nebat leaned somewhat toward that opinion, and leading all who would follow him in that direction, he "caused Israel to sin."

Is this popular saying true under the Christian dispensation? Jesus Christ came—not to destroy the one Church of the Old Testament, but to fulfil or perfect it. So far from teaching that dogma is bigotry and truth a mere matter of opinion, He described the false teachings of sectarians as evil weeds in God's field. "Every plant that My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." So far from encouraging divisions, He prayed that all might be one. This was also the teaching of His disciples. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "Let there be no divisions among you." St. Peter, at one time, for the sake of gaining the popular ear, was a Jew when amongst the Jews, and a Gentile when in company with Gentiles. But St. Paul corrected him by wholesome reproof in the presence of the faithful, "for he was to be blamed." And so far from encouraging schism or holding that "one church is as good as another," the injunction of this Apostle was,—"Let there be no divisions amongst you." "Take heed to sound doctrine." "Keep that which is committed to thee."

But some will say: "Our Lord on a certain occasion rebuked certain of His disciples when they wished Him to forbid a man whom they found casting out devils in the name of Jesus, because he followed not Jesus in the company of His disciples." True, but although so far working with God's help, that man by not seeking the company of Jesus and the fellowship of His disciples, lost the teaching by which the Master privately instructed His immediate flock. Those in the "little ships" were greatly benefited by the stilling of the tempest on the sea of Galilee, but lost the comfort of being with the Master in the ship.

The Samaritans were schismatics, dissenters from God's ancient Church, yet Jesus sought—not to encourage their schism—but to lead them into His fold. God was manifest in the flesh for the purpose of establishing—not many churches or sects—but One Visible, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, for the salvation of the world. Unity with His Church is not to be gained by multiplying sects or minifying the Faith. Dissent from the Visible Church entails (1) loss of the comfort of fellowship, as in the case of the men in the little ships and the man who cast out devils in the name of Christ, but followed him not in the company of His more immediate disciples; (2) loss of definite teaching in the Catholic truth; (3) eventual loss of Faith. This is well named the "Down Grade" by Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.—*Churchwork.*

FREQUENT COMMUNION.

Bishop Coxe of Western New York thus counsels the clergy of his diocese:

The New Testament tells us clearly to hallow the Lord's Day by the Lord's Supper. This is our law and our rubric; and to this reformation I call you all, in God's name. I consider our neglect of Scripture and of the primitive example, in this respect a grave abuse, and a sad impeachment of our sincerity in claiming

to follow Scripture and the Primitive Church. The Prayer Book itself is against us; we are all wrong in our practice, however orthodox in theory; therefore heresies (concerning the Lord's Supper) are permitted, and they are the lash of God upon our inconsistency. I say then, very solemnly and earnestly, let the weekly Eucharist be restored, as soon as possible, in all the churches and chapels of this diocese. * * * It will be a blessing to the pastor himself and a blessing to those who may be disposed to join him in this act of practical obedience. With all my heart I exhort you to this obedience; with all that I can do or say as a bishop, I will support my brethren in it. Who will gainsay? I counsel nothing hasty or inconsiderate. Even reforms may be rendered useless by rude remedies and ill-considered movements. Do nothing prematurely. Instruct first by Scriptural exposition, and do not drive, but lead. Be wise and prudent; be tender and sympathizing; avoid "the appearance of evil," and indulge in nothing sentimental; but trust in God, do your duty, and he will not leave you or forsake you. Where two or three are gathered for this service, there He is especially; present by His Spirit; and surely there are two or three in every parish who, as often as the day of the Lord returns, will rise early to commemorate Christ's resurrection, and, after the example of the Apostles and their immediate disciples, to join in that 'breaking of bread' which he has commanded to be done for a perpetual memorial.—*Selected.*

DIVORCE LEGISLATION.

Sooner or later the conscience of our citizens is likely to demand from the United States Congress legislation on divorce that will apply equally to all the States. At present the State laws on this subject differ almost radically.

On the permanence of the family hangs the destiny of the country; if the family maintains its place as loving and honorable we have no fears for Church or State; but there is a vast deal of unloving and dishonorable family relationships. We find an article on this matter in the New York Observer, which is of importance:

Mr. W. F. Wilcox's examination of the statistics of divorce in the United States has furnished much material for comment. In 1885 there were granted in this country 23,472 divorces. It is taken for granted that for twenty years there has been a continual increase in the percentage of divorced persons, it being estimated that in 1870 over three per cent. of the marriages resulted in divorce, in 1880 over four per cent., and in 1890 over six per cent. All such generalizations, however, are extremely imperfect and uncertain, as the statistics are largely conjectural, and such great factors entering into the problem as the changed condition in respect to marriage of several millions of colored persons. In regard to the effect of not allowing divorced persons to re-marry, Mr. E. J. Phelps remarks that desire for another partner is the chief cause of marital dissatisfaction, saying that 'nine tenths, perhaps ninety-nine hundredths of the divorce cases would disappear if there could be no re-marriage.' We do not believe that this is the case in the sphere where divorce makes the most impression on account of the social status of the parties. Ordinarily, among reputable persons, it is simply the gross misconduct or inhumanity of one of the parties that leads to or compels legal proceedings.

At present the chief question of interest relates to the influence of divorce legislation on private and public morals. It is generally conceded that laws relating to morals are useful in proportion to the power of the public opinion by which they are enforced. It is also known that the average of opinion may be so powerful