

ary, but a sacred, contract. Hence it was properly called a sacrament.

The indissoluble character of marriage continues to be theoretically the doctrine of both Anglicans and of the Church of Rome at the present time. But although the Romish view of matrimony is theoretically strict, it is practically lax, because it refuses to recognize as religiously valid, any marriage, which has not been solemnized by a priest of that denomination, with the result that any other marriage is regarded by Romanists as mere legalized concubinage and its dissolution not only a lawful but a meritorious act. The Anglican part of the Church, on the other hand regards all marriages between persons having the right to contract matrimony as indissoluble when solemnized before persons authorized by law to solemnize matrimony, irrespective of whether that person be a priest of the Church of Rome, a clergyman of the Church of England, or any Protestant minister, or even an ordinary layman duly authorized to perform the ceremony. These considerations cannot be lost sight of where matrimonial legislation is in question.

But it must be recognized as a fact, as Bishop Gore has recently said, "that the modern State cannot be assumed to be distinctly Christian." It has to legislate for all classes of people and it is bound by the principle of religious tolerance from which it will not depart. We cannot conceal from ourselves that there are those in our midst who do not adopt the view of Christ concerning matrimony, and they do not regard it as an indissoluble bond. The only question is therefore whether they are yet sufficiently numerous to justify the Parliament of Canada in giving effect to their opinions concerning divorce. But, after all, the question now brought prominently before the public by Mr. Johnston's very able paper is whether the present cumbersome, unsatisfactory and unfair procedure for obtaining a divorce should not be superseded.