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DIVORCE.

"The stability of the family," says Mr. Lecky, "is more essential than any other single element to the moral, social, and even political well-being of a nation. It is of vital importance to the education of the young. It is the special seed-plot and condition of the best virtues of the community, the foundation stone on which the whole social system must rest. Few greater misfortunes can happen to a nation than that the domestic virtues should have ceased to be prized; that family life, with all its momentous interests, should have become the sport of passion and of caprice" (a).

IN THE UNITED STATES.—The importance of uniformity and certainty in the marriage relation, and the disastrous results from relaxation of the rules which govern it, have been well pointed out by Mr. Woodrow Wilson in dealing with the conflict of laws in the United States, where each State of the Union has the power to grant divorces: "Above all things else, it has touched the marriage relation, that tap-root of all social growth, with a deadly corruption.

Not only has the marriage tie been very greatly relaxed in some of the States, while in others it retains its old-time tightness, so that the conservative rules which jealously guarded the family, as the heart of the State, promise amid the confusion to be almost forgotten; but diversities between State and State have made possible the most scandalous processes of collusive divorce and fraudulent marriage" (b).

Mr. Justice David McAdam, of the New York Supreme Court, has lately said: "The present condition of affairs with regard to divorce is deplorable. We have now forty-five States, all of which (excepting South Carolina, in which divorces are not granted)

(a) Democracy and Liberty, p. 191.

(b) The State, p. 905.