

tified in accepting again a general principle, and imply as in consanguinity all of similar affinity with those named as included within the prohibition? This we conceive to be the relevant issue. Now, let it be remembered that our argument here is purely inferential; principles must guide us, and at this point we cannot fail to see that there is a specific difference between consanguinity and affinity, plainly cautioning us against using the same ground of inference. Physiological reasons do obtain in the one which can have no hold in the other. To this the reply is given that the married are "no longer twain, but one flesh," to which, briefly, our rejoinder is, True, *during the continuance of the marriage relation*, which on all sides is acknowledged to be terminated by death; this Jesus most plainly taught—Mark xii. 18-25. The affinity ceases when the tie that created it is severed. This to the writer seems incontrovertible; for if, the husband being dead, the woman is "loosed from the law of her husband"—Rom. vii. 2—assuredly the wife being dead, the husband is released from the law of the wife, and, by necessary inference, from the affinities entailed. The degrees of consanguinity are those into which we are born, from which we can no more part than from our complexion; the degrees of affinity are created by a relationship which death destroys, and when the bond is broken the bound are free. We are justified, therefore, in suggesting a principle regulating the degrees of affinity in the matter under review differing from that which regulates the degrees of consanguinity. This we briefly do. Physiological considerations must rule the one, social considerations the other; the one set of considerations are permanent, the other not necessarily so. There are social considerations which imperatively prohibit a man from looking upon a girl as a possible wife who has entered his home as a daughter; hence a stepdaughter is forbidden, and the Roman code wisely forbid the same whether natural or adopted. There may be social considerations why the sister should take the sister's place in the home, to which, as a relative by affinity, she has been no stranger. Thus it may fairly be maintained that the degree of consanguinity prohibited should guide in all similar degrees, while on scriptural grounds we are not required in the relations of affinity to go beyond those expressly laid down; or if

we extend the same, to do so on grounds of social inexpediency, not on the ground of physiological unfitness.

Do we advocate the marriage in question? To this the reply is easy: Marriage is the spontaneous coming together of those who mutually agree thereunto, for better or for worse. Each man and woman must be held free to make their choice and abide thereby; it suffices for us that no law of God, or legitimate right of man, is broken thereby. And we have presented our reasons for holding that, accepting the Bible as our rule of faith and manners, no valid objection lies on scriptural authority against the entering upon the relation in question. To call such a marriage incest is, we believe, to sadden hearts God would not sadden, and to cloud homes on which Heaven would send free sunlight. Over such unions, when entered into with Christian purpose, we can heartily say, "Whom God hath joined together let not man part asunder."

As one of the signs of the times, we ask attention to the following abbreviated "Confession of Faith," prepared for and approved by the Mission Committees of the Established, Free, and United Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, and recommended by them to their respective Assemblies. If this is all required from Churches abroad, the question is inevitable, Why ask more from those at home? The new creed is still further suggestive. The distinctive features of Calvinism are not to be found therein; the limited atonement view, election, and the perseverance of the saints are quietly ignored, and the unending nature of eternal punishment is commuted into "being condemned, shall suffer the punishment due to their sins." This new departure is perhaps one of the most significant marks of the shaking the old forms of faith are undergoing; be it so that the things which cannot be shaken may remain:—

The presiding minister shall read the following Statement of Doctrine, to which assent is required in order to license or ordination:—

I. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and duty.

II. There is but one God—a spirit, self-existent, omnipresent, yet distinct from all other spirits and from all material things: infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth; and He alone is to be worshipped.

III. In the Godhead there are three persons, the Father,