

ought to obey God rather than men," and if at any time you are called upon to officiate in such a case, it will be your duty to refuse, for compliance would be wilful sin.

While speaking of marriages, I wish to correct a common misapprehension, respecting the force of a license. It is commonly supposed that it obliges a Clergyman to marry the persons who have obtained it, but its effect is merely to dispense with the publication of banns, and if he knows of any objection to the marriage, he is not relieved of his responsibility by the license.

An Act has also been passed, permitting Clergymen ordained in the United States to officiate here, under the Bishop's license, notwithstanding the prohibition contained in the Imperial Act of George III., chap. 84. Considering our proximity to the States, and the fact that the Clergy of our communion are always welcomed *there*, it has always been an unpleasant duty to treat them otherwise than as we are treated by *them*, and I rejoice that the disabilities are now removed.

You are aware that determined efforts have been made in England to obtain a revision of our Prayer Book, and we have reason to thank God that they have been unsuccessful, for any such revision as was proposed would probably have led to a large secession from the Church. The alterations desired by some would be deemed highly objectionable by others, and it would be vain to expect, for anything new, the feelings which have been engendered by the long-continued use of a book, now venerable for its antiquity, as well as cherished on account of its intrinsic merits. We do not pretend that our Prayer Book is perfect in all its parts, for all human compositions must bear traces of human infirmity, but we believe we have in it a heritage of inestimable value, and we may well be jealous of any interference with it. It may be that the compilers have sometimes omitted what might advantageously

moral and spiritual character of the nation, bringing the sanctity of the marriage vow into disregard, and multiplying year after year the number of separations between those whom God hath joined together." It was stated in the course of the debate, that Sir Cresswell Cresswell had "confessed that the opposition was well grounded, that he had been taught the lesson of experience, that he had come to the conclusion that it was better for society to treat marriage as indissoluble, considering it merely as a social question."

Canon Selwyn, in concluding his speech, said: "If the result of the legislature having made our marriage laws as lax as those of the Romans, should be the same, evil following upon evil, and sin upon sin, bringing down the judgments of an offended God, let it not be said that we, the Bishops and Clergy of the Church, stood by and made no effort to stem the current of evil."