

The Royal Commissioners, appointed June 28th, 1847, to Enquire into the state of the law relating to marriages of affinity, state as follows:

"Some persons contend that these marriages are forbidden expressly, or inferentially, by Scripture. But it does not appear from the evidence that this opinion is generally entertained. We do not find that the persons who contract these marriages, and the relations and friends who approve them, have a less strong sense than others of religious and moral obligation, or are marked by laxity of conduct. These marriages will take place when a concurrence of circumstances gives rise to mutual attachment; they are not dependent on legislation." Report signed by the Bishop of Lichfield Mr. STUART WORTLEY, Dr. LUSHINGTON, Mr. BLAKE, Mr. Justice WILLIAMS, and Lord Advocate RUTHERFORD.

The most Reverend Dr. TAIT, present Archbishop of Canterbury, said:

"Whether the question is considered in a religious, moral, or social point of view, such marriages are unobjectionable, while in many instances they contribute to the happiness of the parties and to the welfare of motherless children, and among the poor, have a tendency to prevent immorality."

The Bishop of Down and Connor (Dr. KNOX) said:—

"As it is admitted by the ripest scholars and most accurate critics, that there is not the slightest prohibition in the Scriptures against the marriage with a deceased wife's sister, I consider the legal restriction to be most unjust and injurious, producing the deepest social evils."

The late Right Reverend Bishop ROTTEN, of Pennsylvania, said:—

"I am not one of those who hold that such marriages are forbidden by Scripture—and I am not aware that any special disadvantages, social or domestic, have resulted from them."

The Right Reverend Bishop McILVAINE, of Ohio, said:—
"Such marriages, I apprehend, are nearly as frequent as the circumstances which usually give rise to them. I have not known any social disadvantages attending them."

The Right Reverend Bishop BURGESS Maine said:—"I know of no social disadvantages attending such marriages. The apprehensions expressed in England on this head, are entirely dissipated by our experience."