

THE DIVORCE HARVEST.

We regret to see that the annual crop of divorces granted in Canada continues to increase. During the last session of the Dominion Parliament twenty-two divorces were granted, fifteen at the instances of wives, and seven at the instance of husbands. In every case but one the cause alleged is adultery; and the remaining case was for an unnameable offence. The applicants for relief are empowered to marry again, but no such permission is granted to the "guilty party."

Of the total number of twenty-two applications, twelve came from Ontario, four from Quebec, three from Manitoba, and two from Alberta. Ontario, as usual, having the unenviable position of heading the list.

It is sometimes assumed by "the guilty party" that, though not expressly authorized to marry again, he or she may nevertheless do so, and in some cases such a view has been carried into practical effect, but it yet remains to be determined whether a parliamentary divorce quoad the "guilty party" has any greater legal effect than the old divorce a mensa et thoro, which was merely a separation from bed and board and did not carry with it the right of remarriage. Those who contract such unions therefore seem to run the risk of the marriage being accounted illegal, and their offspring, if any, illegitimate.

It would seem proper that those responsible for the maintenance of public morality should consider whether a test case should not be brought to determine the question whether or not such second marriages are lawful, in order that innocent persons may not be led into the false position of thinking themselves lawfully married if they are really not.

There can be little doubt that the primitive Christian Church regarded marriage lawfully contracted, as indissoluble for any cause whatever during the lifetime of the parties. This seems to be established by two recent English publications, one by the Rev. Dr. Wilkin, and the other by Bishop Gore, and according to these writers the better opinion of Biblical critics seems to be that the variation between St. Matthew's gospel and those of St.