

that is what it amounts to when remarriage following divorce is permitted. Marriage is a divine institution. Man when he was first created had a helpmate created for him also, and it was divinely instituted that these two should come together in the marriage contract. We recognize the divine sanction of the marriage contract by having the marriage ceremony performed under the cloak of the church; we acknowledge that it is a divine institution. If we are going to follow out that line of reasoning we should also realize that it is divinely ordained that "whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." If remarriage is permitted following divorce, adultery is committed and legalized.

Mr. GOOD: I would like to ask the hon. member if in the ordinary meaning of divorce we do not imply the right to remarry?

Mr. CARMICHAEL: I think that is correct, but I think that our law as it stands is not a proper enactment—that is my own personal opinion. We grant the right to remarry, but in so doing we legalize adultery. I am prepared to admit that it is not fair to put upon the woman in the four western provinces restrictions that are not placed upon the man. But there is a way around that. One hon. member made mention of a reasonable way around that, and his remarks were rather made light of. But in all fairness, if divorce is a national social evil, if it is something that we wish to suppress rather than to encourage, should we not place on the man the same restrictions that are now placed on the woman, in the four western provinces, namely, that in addition to adultery it should be necessary to prove cruelty or desertion for a period of two years?

Mr. BEAUBIEN: Is it not so that in many cases the man could prove cruelty?

Mr. CARMICHAEL: In any case it should be just as easy for the husband to prove cruelty on the part of the wife as for the wife to prove cruelty on the part of the husband. I presume that in some women at least there is a streak of the old Adam that is not good, just the same as there is in some men.

I seriously think that our divorce legislation should be reconsidered in this parliament. It has been more than amusing to me, it has caused me to think very seriously, to sit here during the past three sessions and see the divorce mill grinding out divorce after divorce until the number reached over one hundred for two provinces of this Dominion.

If we had the statistics for the nine provinces I am sure that our divorces would number more than five hundred for the past few years. During the last eight, nine or ten years there has been a very great increase in the number of divorces granted in Canada. I do not know whether there is much sympathy in this House towards such a condition or not, but personally I feel that it is a menace to our national life that we should unitedly stand against. We have but to look to our cousins to the south of the international line, at least in the western portion of that country, to find conditions existing which are not very enviable. It was my privilege to have in my home some few years ago a lady from the western states, and in our conversation she stated that she had been divorced three times, and she glibly remarked that if this man did not suit her she would divorce him and get another one. It had come to be with her a sort of ordinary thing. That is the kind of thing that we as a young nation are up against. The citizen is given the impression that he may quite properly say, "Oh, well, I am going into the marriage contract, I will take a chance, and if it does not suit me, I can easily jump out and try it over again." I am of the opinion, Mr. Speaker, that such laxity should not be permitted, and if we in this parliament can raise the bars and make still more restrictive the restrictions, I feel that we would be doing a great benefit to our national life. If it is to be suggested as one hon. member remarked, that we have divorce and are not likely to get away from it, then I would suggest that we seriously consider the proposition of taking the celebration of the marriage contract away from the cloak of the church and put it under the judiciary. I feel that that would be a serious step, but if the marriage contract is going to be considered as lightly as heretofore it has been, and if we in this parliament are going to sanction such lightness of consideration, then in all fairness to what I consider the sacredness of the marriage contract it should be performed by the judiciary, by a magistrate, a justice of the peace, or some other civil authority, and taken away entirely from the cloak of the church. Believing as I do, Mr. Speaker, I could not sanction the bill as it is before the House, and I feel compelled to vote against it.

Mr. ROBERT FORKE (Brandon): I almost hesitate to say a few words on this subject after the very eloquent address that we have had from the hon. member for Belle-