

between licence and freedom, disorder and order, caprice and sound morals, immorality and morality. Let us not delude ourselves; we are facing quite a serious problem, and if we do not consider important matters on their merit and from their true angles, we shall grope in the dark on a course leading us to error. Marriage is assimilated to concubinage and people are told that if they have mistakenly contracted marriage it is up to the man or woman who has made that mistake, to make a fresh start. However those who after a first marriage, found that they had made a mistake, have married a second time. Seeing that they had made a second mistake, they married a third time, and then found out that they had been just as much mistaken the last time as the first. Moreover, we are asked to cover up that shame with our ridiculous legislation. How stupid! Divorce is condemned by all church authorities, Protestant or Catholic. Protestant denominations have repeatedly done so. I feel that in a country like ours divorce should be prohibited, for the sound reason that marriage is not a whim and does not exist for the mere satisfaction of husband and wife. Marriage is a divine institution whose purpose is the procreation of the generation which will come after us, which will develop this country and ultimately ensure the continuity of our traditions and our national heritage.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. MARQUIS: Mr. Speaker, I admit that my hon. friends have every right to hold different views, but there is quite a difference between an opinion and a principle, and as far as I am concerned, I consider that in such matters we should be governed by the principles proceeding from a divine source, which is the same for all religions which glorify God and for all countries where faith exists. The principle which we must uphold is the protection of marriage and the elimination of divorce. Besides, did not the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Maybank) admit it a few moments ago, when he said, there was no sense in this, that this legislation should be changed.

The province of Quebec has its own law as regards marriage. Section 185 of the civil code, which governs property and civil rights in our province, reads as follows:

185. Marriage is dissolved only through the natural death of the husband or wife; as long as they are both living, it is indissoluble.

In our province, the law says that marriage is indissoluble and that no legislation can annul it. Because, as Catholics and Christians, the husband and wife must live in

conformity with the principles which have been the basis of their education, which must govern their lives and lead them toward the great beyond. It is not through a bill of the Canadian parliament that their status can be established from the standpoint of religion or family because this divorce law prevents their being arraigned for bigamy, and precludes any criminal proceedings.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that divorce legislation should be abolished in this country. The hon. members of the Senate are tired of hearing divorce cases. Many hon. members of this house, especially those from the province of Quebec, object to the passing of divorce bills. Catholics and even some hon. members of other denominations or from other provinces, whom I wish to congratulate, voted last year against some divorce bills. I respectfully submit that we should do away with divorce and leave each province free to settle marriage matters.

Finally, we have, at the present time, in the province of Quebec, a statute relating to marriage. Now, what is the effect of these divorce bills? The Quebec civil code is eluded. Indirect methods are countenanced of doing things which cannot be done directly. These acts are passed in the Canadian parliament and enforced in the province of Quebec, in spite of the opposition of its representatives. The time has come for these matters to be considered most seriously, for they constitute a vital problem for the country. Once for all, let us rid this house and parliament of the divorce problem.

Mr. Speaker, I wished to quote statistics. Unfortunately, the time allotted to me will not permit it. However, I want to refer to what the hon. member for Bonaventure (Mr. Arsenault) stated a few months ago, in connection with divorces in Canada:

In 1901 there were only 661 divorces in Canada, for a population of 5,300,000; in 1911, 1,530 actions were taken and in 1921, the number had climbed to 7,410. Between 1911 and 1921, a period similar to the present one, inasmuch as it was marked by an armed conflict, the troublous times resulted in a five-fold increase in the number of divorces, which climbed from 1,500 to 7,401. In 1941, divorces numbered 14,032 in our country compared to 7,441 in 1931. This is an increase of practically 100 per cent. On the strength of these figures, unless we endeavour to curb this tendency, if the five-fold increase in the number of divorces holds for the period 1941 to 1951 as for that of 1911 to 1921, 70,000 homes will have been broken in Canada in the ten years previous to 1951.

(Text):

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The hour reserved for private bills having expired, the house will now revert to its business prior to six o'clock.