

NOTES.

The lax divorce laws in some of the States of our neighbouring nation, and their effect upon the permanency of republican institutions are attracting the most serious attention of thoughtful minds. In a paper lately read before the "American Social Science Association," the writer notices the fact, that in some of the States, one in ten of the families formed by marriage are yearly broken up by divorce; and this sometimes for causes the most trivial. Speaking of the evil resulting to the individual from such a state of matters, he says: "the glory of man above the brutes, and of the cultivated man above the savage, is, to a great degree, in his power to draw motives from the past and the future. Culture extends the range of human motive. That man is best prepared for citizenship who comes to the discharge of its duties and to the enjoyment of its privileges from a home which has charged his whole being with the principles and purposes which only a permanent family relation and life can impart and continually bring to bear upon him. That citizen who has been reared in a home where the permanency of the marriage relation has never been in doubt and who has been carefully trained by the motives of family life, drawn from such permanency, has a prudence, a courage, an insight and a foresight, and a staying power that tend to make him a wise ruler and a valuable member of society."

This is the matter viewed simply from a rational stand-point; but when we think of the accumulated guilt upon the nation that deliberately and persistently degrades and demoralizes the Divine Institutions of the family by unholy laws, we tremble for the future reckoning which must come. The family is the fountain from which most assuredly either blessing or cursing will flow to both church and state.

The death of the late President of the United States has brought the subject of prayer and its efficacy before the minds of men as perhaps never before at any period of the world's history. Through daily and weekly papers wherever the English language is spoken, and even beyond the confines of the Saxon tongue, men have earnestly asked the question, Does God answer prayer? And there has been no time, perhaps, when so much has been intelligently written on the subject. One writer draws an important distinction between "faith in prayer," and "prayer in faith;" the former being only an ignorant superstitious confidence in the prayer itself, somewhat similar to that which the Romanist reposes in his crucifix, while the latter is an intelligent and abiding trust in the mercy and wisdom of God in ministering to the real and pressing needs of men. Prayer in faith is not the mere selfish outpouring of the heart, but it is the earnest pleading of the devout soul to be relieved, yet conscious of its own ignorance of what is best, ever willing to say, "not my will but thine be done." The humble christian who has once learned by experience the way to God needs no argument in support of the efficacy of prayer, but remains at the mercy seat until even disaster is turned backward, or else made luminous, and prophetic of impending blessing.