

Mr. Wortley stops? He alters the law of the land, and he violates the law of the Church, and he wounds the feelings of thousands of men and of ten thousands of women, and he hazards the happiness of domestic life in some of its dear and now sacred relations; but does he establish a principle? No, he only makes an exception. The principle, and some are bold enough to maintain it, is—"Abolish all restraints on marriage, except where there is a blood-relationship; we mean, such a blood-relationship as nature abhors." But "stop," says a still bolder one, "why should my liberty be restrained by your scruples about nature abhorring anything?" We cannot pursue this subject further; but we may say thus much, that to get rid of all prohibition in respect to *all* degrees of *affinity* is consistent with a principle—odious, repulsive, and fatal as would be the working of that principle; but to get rid of the prohibition in respect to the one prominent degree, for which heaven and earth are now moved, involves great evils, in fact, and does not attain, even in theory, the miserable satisfaction of establishing a mischievous principle.

We have just said, and much of the preceding reasoning, and all of our preceding quotations, have had relation to the one prominent degree now sought to be expunged from the Tables of Prohibited Degrees; we mean, the marriage of a man with the sister of his deceased wife. But we must not conceal from our readers that Mr. Wortley's bill proposes to legalize another union, which, though technically further removed, is, to our apprehension, in some respects even more repulsive than that of a widower with his late wife's sister—it is his marriage with her niece. We feel all the delicacy of this, and indeed of every portion of the subject. It is enough to say, that in the vast majority of all marriages the age of the man exceeds, and sometimes greatly exceeds, that of the wife; and that in the vast majority of the cases which could be conceived under the present head, the widower would be far older than his second bride—probably a child during his first marriage, whom he ought never to have regarded except with parental eyes.

But such cases are brought forward in the evidence before