reason why a man should not marry the sister of his deceased wife than the wife of his deceased uncle. It is surely a miserable, superficial criticism, which, after deliberate investigation, can attempt to show that, whilst the Word of God forbids a man to marry the wife of his deceased uncle, or departed brother, it permits him to marry the sister of his deceased wife.

An objection has been taken to this interpretation altogether, on the ground that Leviticus xviii. 16, does not refer to marriage with a brother's widow, but with a brother's wife. The language, it is alleged, is precise, and it is a brother's wife that is mentioned, not a brother's widow. There is something very plausible in this objection; but it cannot stand a searching investigation. The wife of a living brother a man could not marry: the thing involved a legal impossibility. A wicked man might commit adultery with her; but it is not of adultery the law is here speaking, (that is taken up at the 20th verse), but of the degrees of relationship within which it is unlawful to marry, when there is no other barrier. That it cannot be adultery which is here alluded to is still farther evident from the fact, that, in chapter xx. 10, adultery is prohibited on pain of death. And surely, if common adultery is to be punished with death, adultery with a brother's wife merits some punishment, if possible, still more severe. But the only punishment threatened to the parties who violate the law contained in chap. xviii. 16 and xx. 21, is that they shall be childless.

It has been alleged, however, that the prohibition refers to a woman who has been divorced by a brother. The prohibition would, no doubt, apply in such a case; but this is not what is mainly intended here; for, in such a case, the woman would be no longer the brother's wife, and could with far less propriety be so termed than the widow of a deceased brother. In familiar language, it is perfectly common, and not at all improper, to talk of a widow as the wife of her departed husband.

It has been thought that this objection is greatly confirmed by the fact, that a man was by law bound to take the widow of a deceased brother who had died childless. This, however, was a special law for a particular case, and intended to serve an important purpose in the peculiar economy of the Jews. If a departed brother left a wife and children, no surviving brother was allowed to marry her. But, if she had no children, then the eldest surviving brother was *bound* to take her, that he might raise up seed to his brother, that they might be called by his name, and possess his inheritance. And probably this law was intended to preserve the distinction of inheritances, and prevent the accumulation of property in families.

Another objection to this interpretation has been founded on Leviticus xviii. 18: "Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister to vex *her*, to uncover her nakedness, besides the other in her life-*time*." It has been alleged that, though this verse positively forbids a man from marrying his wife's sister during her life-time, it contains no prohibition to that effect after her death. If the translation in our authorized version conveyed the true meaning and spirit of the original, this would indeed be a formidable objection; for if a man is simply forbidden to marry his wife's sister during her life-time, it seems a legitimate inference that he may marry her after his wife's death. We have no doubt, however, that the authorized translation of Leviticus xviii. 18 conveys a false impression of the original. The correct meaning of the Hebrew phrase is given in the margin: "One wife to another"; "Thou shalt not take one wife to another," &c.; and it is deeply to be regretted that the phrase should not have been translated here, as in many other places, without any regard to the mere letter of the Hebrew words. It is well known that the expressions, "a woman to her sister," and "a man to his brother," are Hebraisms of exactly the same import with "one to another." For example, in the treaty with Abimelech and