

THE WATERDOWN REVIEW

Issued every Thursday morning from the office, Dundas Street, Waterdown.

G. H. GREENE
Editor and Publisher
Member C. W. N. A.

THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 1921

Grace Church

REV. H. J. LEAKE, M. A., Rector
Sixth Sunday after Trinity
11 a. m. The Privileges of the Strong.
7 p. m. Friendship.

Knox Church

REV. J. F. WEDDERBURN, B. A., B. D. Minister
Union Services in Methodist church
Mission Band meets Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock.
Sunday School and Bible Classes at 9.45 a. m.

Methodist Church

REV. C. L. POOLE, B. D., Pastor
Sunday School 10 p. m.
Public Services 11 a. m. and 7 p. m.
Union Services
Young Peoples Service on Monday Evening at 8 p. m.
Prayer Service on Thursday Evening at 8 p. m.
All are welcome at these services.

NO RENO NECESSARY

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE ARE EASY IN RUSSIA.

People Have Only to Appear Before a Clerk and Express a Desire to Be Regarded as Married and No Further Ceremony is Necessary, and They Can Get Untied Again With Equal Ease—Every Child Is Regarded as Legitimate.

THERE appears to be only one thing as easy as getting married in Russia, and that is getting a divorce. In fact after looking over some sections of the Soviet code dealing with these matters, one wonders why there are such institutions as marriage and divorce under Lenin. Certainly they mean very little when a couple can be married by merely informing a clerk of their desire to do so, and can be divorced on the request of either. They can be married again in three days. There is no marriage ration. One can be married as frequently as he desires, and unmarried just as frequently. If there is any particular difference between this system and what is called the "nationalization of women" it is not at once apparent. Yet commenting upon the Soviet code, the Russian Soviet Bureau in New York City says: "The code is a superb rebuke to those psychopathically afflicted persons who spread the sickly tattle about nationalization of women." If that is true, it also rebukes persons of ordinary common sense.

The first thing the Soviet Government did when it began to reform the existing marriage laws was to declare that all ecclesiastical and religious marriages contracted prior to December 20, 1917, should be deemed void. Millions of Russian marriages, we presume, belong to this class. But those married were permitted to appear before a registrar of marriages and regularize their position. All they suffered, therefore, was a cruel insult. Henceforth, there are to be no religious or ecclesiastical marriages. They are to be exclusively in the hands of the Soviets. The conditions necessary to marriage among Russians is that the female shall be sixteen years old and the male eighteen. Both must be of what passes for a sound mind in Russia, and at the time of the marriage neither must be living in a state of registered or unregistered marriage with anyone else. The couple notify the registrar that they desire to be married. He enters their names in a book and they are married.

The provision that neither applicant shall be living in a state of unregistered marriage with another person at the time of the marriage calls attention to another phase of family relationship under the Soviet. Unregistered marriage and registered marriage appear to be the same thing. Thus we read that "Actual descent shall be the basis of the family. No distinction shall be made between the relationship established through marriage and that established by union outside of marriage. Chil-

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dren descending from parents who are not married have equal rights with those descending from parents living in registered marriage. If a woman is consorting with a man to whom she is not married and is in expectation of a child she is obliged to notify a Soviet official three months before the expected birth, and the Government will see to it that she is cared for until she has passed through the ordeal. Afterward the father of the illegitimate child will have to perform the same duties for it as though it had been born in wedlock. If the woman has been consorting with more than one man, each of them will be required to contribute to the maintenance of the child and its mother. Another paragraph sets forth negatively the impediments to marriage. They appear to be few. Vows of celibacy are not recognized. The monastic priests are relieved of these vows. Religious differences do not constitute a bar. Once married the couple shall decide whether they shall use the name of the husband, or that of the wife, or joint names. If they become divorced they can take new names. Once married, the husband and wife become jointly responsible for their support. If the husband falls ill it will be the duty of the wife to support him until he returns to an earning basis. Nor can a married person shirk this duty by applying for a divorce while one of the partners is ill, unless the sick person is willing. In that case when the divorce is granted the Soviet court will decide what the hale partner is to pay to the other while the illness lasts. Since illegitimacy is to be considered no disgrace, and since marriage can be ended by a mere application, it would seem that the Russians would see no particular benefits accruing to those who get married and would tend to enter what is called unregistered marriage. One of the paragraphs concerning divorce is as follows: "The mutual consent of the husband and wife or the desire of either of them to obtain a divorce shall be considered a ground for divorce. A petition for the dissolution of marriage may be presented orally or in writing and an official report shall be drawn thereon. Upon rendering a decision for the dissolution of marriage the judge shall issue to the parties upon their application a certificate of divorce, and shall transmit not later than three days thereafter a copy of his decision to the local Bureau of Vital Statistics or any other institution where the marriage so dissolved was registered. The code also provides that an application to dissolve a marriage may be made by any persons whose interests were affected by the marriage or even by the Soviet Government."

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"I found...
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