

you say to me "You are making a speech on divorce, while this is only a question of equality." Well, my position is this: I am against divorce and believe if there were no divorces, marriages perhaps would be more carefully entered into; and the morality of this country would be improved if nobody was allowed to get a divorce for any cause, but separation would probably be taken advantage of in a great many cases. You know as well as I do that divorces have come before this House and we pay little attention to them, but inside of a few weeks one divorcé is married, which is perfectly honourable and perfectly proper under existing laws; and you know that in a great many cases of divorces that come before this House the party that is asking for the divorce has been keeping company with somebody else for weeks, months and years perhaps, and only comes to get the divorce to be free from a bond that is irksome so that the party may take on another bond that he or she thinks will not be so irksome.

I want to come back to this question of equality. The Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) has said that at the present time all the provinces stand on an equality. They all come to the Parliament of Canada.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

After Recess

The House resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. GRAHAM: I think I was about through at six o'clock, but I shall say just a few words now in conclusion. It has been suggested that it is too expensive for anyone desiring a divorce to bring his or her case to Ottawa. As I said before, I am not in favour of divorce at all, and if I had my way I would make it so expensive that no one would come to Ottawa. There is another point which is always present in my mind in regard to another question which I mentioned to-day. If a couple be legally separated they can reunite without any comment or any suggestion of scandal; and if hon. members will look back they will no doubt recall very many instances of couples who in a moment, or perhaps after a year, of petulance decided on a legal separation, who on second thought and mature consideration came to the conclusion that for the sake of their families that state was not the best thing for them, and they therefore became re-united. In the case of divorce this is impracticable, if not impossible. Many divorced people have been re-married, but so far as I can remember at the present

time, they have never done so until they have gone through the purgatorial process of being married two or three times in the interval. And this really makes marriage a farce.

Mr. EULER: Would the minister say that this applied to divorced persons in Canada, or is he thinking of the United States? I question whether you would find many cases of divorced persons re-marrying in this country, for there is only one reason for which divorce is given here.

Mr. GRAHAM: I would not confine the remark to marriage in Canada; as a matter of fact I had in mind the larger area of divorce in all countries. As I pointed out in the beginning, marriage in Canada is on a different plane, both from the legal standpoint and from the point of view of the method of performance, from what it is in some other countries. And for that I believe Canada is to be commended. That is why I said that the marriage ceremony in Canada was far more than a civil contract; to my mind it is a moral contract. However, I shall not go over that ground again.

I believe in the equality of sexes in regard to this matter; I am of the opinion that the man should have no right to claim a divorce or separation on grounds not granted to the woman, and in that respect I think I coincide with the sponsor of the bill (Mr. Shaw). But the way in which I would go at it, from my conscientious point of view, would be to add to rather than to lessen the restrictions; I would make the restrictions more rigid on both sides and make it harder for either party to secure a divorce. That is the way I would bring about equality, and as I told my hon. friend last year on the floor of the House, when I spoke on this question, if anyone will introduce a bill for the purpose of putting a greater number of impediments in the way, and so make it harder for people to get divorce, I am ready to vote for it in a moment. I do not want to influence anyone in this respect; I simply speak for myself from a conscientious point of view which I have held for many years, and I cannot, therefore, see my way clear to vote for any measure which would open the door wider to divorce. I will say this, however, that if the object of this bill were to make it easier for a man to get divorce I would vote against it with much less reluctance than I do in this case. In voting against the bill as it stands, I may be charged with voting against equality of treatment as between men and women; but that is not my attitude at all. I will vote for