

applies equally to the Gentiles, and we find particularly, that its violation by the Gentiles is deprecated, which clearly shows that it is moral. We may call it the statute law of heaven in regard to marriage, and hence we account for the solemnity with which it is introduced in the opening verse of the chapter to which I have referred. There is no middle course, as it appears to me, but vizit that which I have stated, and the promiscuous intercourse that constitutes one of the foulest dogmas of Socialism, and I feel impressed with the conviction, that the tendency of that which the bill we have met to oppose, goes to legalize, is to introduce into the upper classes, the same abomination which was lately attempted to be introduced amongst the lower classes—the loathsome abominations of Socialism. The second general principle to which I would beg attention, is, that the sexes are convertible. We mean by this, that what a man may do in respect of marriage, a woman may do; and what a man may not do, a woman may not do. A man and woman are placed on the same footing, and the same prohibition applies to both. The prohibited degrees of marriage to a man in respect of woman, are the prohibited degrees to a woman in respect of a man. This, I apprehend, none will deny. It is, indeed, indispensable, if we admit that a man and a woman are equally moral beings, that a woman has a soul as well as a man, and is equally responsible to God. If that is admitted, the convertibility of the sexes must be admitted also. The third general principle which I am anxious to bring before you, is, that affinity and consanguinity, as grounds of prohibition and permission, are equivalent, to the husband and wife's relations are the same as his own, in the same degree, and to the wife, her husband's relations are the same as her own, in the same degree. That is to say, to a husband, his wife's mother, sister, niece, are the same as his own; and to a wife, her husband's father, brother, nephew, are the same as her own. The relations of each, in short, are alike to both, in the same degree. Now, the principle on which these rest is the principle which lies at the foundation of the law of marriage. God said, "let a man leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh;" there is an identity thus formed between the man and his wife. This identity is at the very foundation of marriage. The importance of this, in regard to social morality must be apparent at once. The principle I have stated of affinity and consanguinity being equivalent, is admitted in the laws of our country, as might be shown by referring to Blackstone's Commentary, and other legal authorities. But it is more to my present purpose to remark, this principle of affinity and consanguinity being equivalent, pervades the whole of the 18th chapter of Leviticus. There are in this chapter seven on instances of prohibited degrees. And it is not unworthy of notice, that of these seventeen degrees, eleven are degrees of affinity, and only six of consanguinity. We are apt to think that consanguinity is a stronger ground of prohibition than affinity; but the majority of prohibitions has respect to cases of affinity, and this entitles us to draw the conclusion, that at least affinity is an equally valid ground of

prohibition with consanguinity. The fourth general principle is, that the prohibited degrees all spring out of one circumstance, they have all one root. What is that root or circumstance? It is propinquity or nearness of kin. Whether they be cases of affinity or consanguinity, the prohibition always rests on this one circumstance of nearness of kin. The foundation is laid for this in man and wife being "one flesh." None of you shall approach to any near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness;" "I am the Lord," Lev. 18; 6. This phrase refers distinctly to marriage, it is a universal law, expressed in language of universality. Observe, too, that the principle on which this prohibition rests, is nearness of kin, or propinquity. And mark the solemnity of the announcement—"I am the Lord." This is what may be called the enacting clause of the statute, which is afterwards more fully unfolded. According to the language of modern legislation it contains the great principle of the bill—the great principle, applicable to what follows on the subject of incest. This marks out the fourth general principle. Now, taking these general principles along with us, let us look in the Scripture and see whether we have any proof that the marriage of a man with his deceased wife's sister, is contrary to the word of God.

The first thing we remark by way of proof is, that a man is expressly forbidden to marry his own sister or half-sister. "The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover." Lev. 18; 9. Now, here, clearly and distinctly, is marriage forbidden between a man and his own sister, the daughter of his mother, or even the half-sister, although she be daughter only of the father, or mother, and not the daughter of both. Nothing can be clearer than this. Remember, then, the third general principle, that affinity and consanguinity are equivalent, and from this it will appear equally clear that a man is forbidden to marry his wife's sister; on the principle of consanguinity, he is forbidden to marry his own sister; and on the principle of affinity he is forbidden to marry his wife's sister, for affinity and consanguinity are the same. If this principle is admitted, as we have endeavored to show that it is in harmony with reason, Scripture, and common law, then it is contrary to the Word of God, for a man to marry his wife's sister.

Again, a woman is forbidden to marry her husband's brother. Lev. 18; 16. Here, clearly, a woman is forbidden to marry her husband's brother, for if a man is forbidden to marry his brother's wife, of course the wife is forbidden to marry her husband's brother. Now, observe, that if a man may not marry his brother's wife, on the second general principle, (that the sexes are convertible), it follows that a woman is not to marry her sister's husband, which is done when a husband marries his wife's sister. But the former is strictly forbidden, and in the convertibility of the sexes, the latter must be forbidden also. It is clear and distinct, therefore, that on the principle of the convertibility of the sexes, this passage forbids a man to marry his brother's wife, and forbids a woman to

marry her sister's husband. But there is a double inference from the passage, and you may take it thus; a wife's sister is to the man what the husband's brother is to the woman, and if a woman may not marry her husband's brother, so neither may a man marry his wife's sister. There was no inference in the world that can be more legitimate than this. True, it existed under the form of dispensation, that there was a law authorizing a man to marry his brother's wife. We find in the book of Deuteronomy, 25 Cap. and 5th verse, "If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger; her husband's brother shall go in unto her and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her." There may seem to be something a little inconsistent in this, but observe, this exception strengthens, instead of weakening the general rule. It does so, inasmuch as nothing else than the original authority which made the first law, could dispense with it by making this exception one. That exceptional law was introduced for a special purpose, and being so, it left the law in force in every other case, and then still further, the special purpose for which this exception was made, having ceased to exist, the law now stands without any exception whatever. And if this will not satisfy our opponents, we beg their attention to this, that no exceptional laws, while in force, constituted not a permission, but an obligation to marry a deceased brother's wife, the widow was allowed to punish him, and to cast on him contempt, if he refused to marry her; and if men will argue from this circumstance in connection with the subject before us, they will find that this argument will go farther than they intended. It will oblige every man whose wife dies, leaving a marriageable sister, to marry that sister; and this, we presume, will not always be found agreeable or convenient to parties.

Now, the third point to which I would refer, is one to which I attach great importance; I do not see how it is to be got over. It is this, that degrees of affinity more remote than that of a wife's sister are directly prohibited. There are two in particular to which I would refer. The first is contained in the 14th verse of the 18th chapter of Lev. "Here a man is prohibited from marrying his aunt-in-law." Then, verse 17th of the same chapter. A daughter by a former marriage—this is a grand step-daughter. Here are two cases prohibited, marriage with an aunt-in-law, and marriage with a grand step-daughter. Now, what is the principle on which they are prohibited? It is given in the conclusive of the 17th verse. "For they are his near kinswomen." It is the principle of propinquity. Very well, if marriage with such is prohibited on the principle of nearness of kin, surely marriages with an individual nearer still must be prohibited also. These individuals are in the collateral relations of the second degree, whereas a wife's sister is in the collateral relation of the first degree. And if the former are not to be married, does not every one see that neither can the latter be taken into the relation of marriage? The conclusion in this case is not less legitimate or conclusive from the premises, than either of the former. Now we have three arguments,