

violation of the conditions of parole. I believe the reform in the remaining cases (over 1,000) was prompt and permanent.

"In fact, I regard our Sabbath-schools, including those of all faiths, as the only effective means to stem the rising tide of vice and crime among our youth. Society carries the heavy burden of criminality, chiefly because of the lack of religious training of the youth.

"If all the children could be kept under the influence of the Sabbath-school, and the grown-ups were active in some church, we could close our prisons and jails, instead of being compelled to enlarge and increase their number.

"The problem of youth is the problem of humanity.

"There are over 17,000,000 boys and girls in this country growing up without moral training from any source—Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish.

"May your labor of love in teaching God to the children be fraught with most glorious results through their salvation and their work in His cause in the years to come."

"With such unquestioned evidence before them of the value of religious training," comments *The Christian Observer*, "is it not strange that parents are willing to neglect this vital feature of home and church training?"

The Divorce Mill Slackening

THE DIVORCE MILL GRINDS OUT less grist last year.

The increase of the wedding rate was greater than the increase of the divorce rate, and some are encouraged to reflect that the historic institution of marriage is not so seriously threatened, after all.

The preliminary report on the 1929 matrimonial statistics, issued by the Department of Commerce, shows that 1,232,559 couples were married in the United States last year.

During the same period 201,475 divorces were recorded. In other words, 10.1 marriages were performed for every 1,000 population, while divorces totaled 1.66 to the thousand.

The increase in marriages in 1929 over those in 1928 was 50,062, or 4.2 per cent., while 1928 showed a decrease of 1.5 per cent. in comparison with 1927. The divorces, altho showing an increase of 2.8 per cent. over 1928, could not keep up with the increase in marriages.

The ratio of divorces to marriages in 1929 shows that for each 6.1 marriages performed one union was dissolved. The year before, the ratio was an even 6 to 1.

Here, then, perhaps, is a sign. In fact, the *Albany Evening News* takes it as such, saying that "the figures show that the good old-fashioned institution of marriage is not failing, despite all the talk of the cynics and alarmists." And it is significant that "we hear more of the marriage failures than of the successful marriages."

A somewhat similar opinion is voiced by the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, which recalls that it was somewhat the fashion for a period to speak flippantly of the decline of marriage and to regard the increase of divorce as a permanent feature of American social evolution. And—

"Along with the pseudo-liberal view-point came diverting theories of temporary marriages of various kinds, including the highly artificial schemes of Judge Ben Lindsey, and the promiscuous theories of Bertrand Russell, happily married monogamist himself.

"This momentary flair for a spurious liberalism, led on by the proponents of the left-wing psychology, has seen its heyday, it appears.

"The purveyors of new systems of mating are losing their following—indeed, they never made any serious impression on the great mass of people of any class or creed.

"In fact, it may be said with safety that it is now definitely fashionable to reject the psychologies on which the 'newer' marriage systems are based.

"This is borne out by the statistics of the Census Bureau. Divorce still increases in absolute numbers, but relatively to marriages it has fallen off greatly. Ohio is a fair example, having

a higher divorce rate than most States. Marriages increased 10.7 per cent. in 1929 over the previous year, while divorces increased 4.6 per cent.

"A similar trend is evident in figures for the entire United States.

"If they prove nothing else, the latest columns of statistical data show plainly that Americans are not disheartened by the dire imaginings of the behaviorists, and remain the most 'married' people of the world, and that a larger percentage of these marriages proves lasting than has been the case in recent years.

"For those thoughtful persons who recognize in the historic marriage institution the one sound basis for our social life, the current trend is certain to be encouraging news."

It is noteworthy that 1929 was the first year that an increase in divorces relative to marriages was not shown since 1922, when the Census Bureau began its current annual statistics of divorce and marriage.

In 1922 there was one divorce for every 7.6 marriages, and in 1916, one divorce for every 12.2 marriages, so that the number of divorces relative to marriages has more than doubled in the United States in 23 years.

Looking into the 1929 figures, the *Buffalo Courier-Express* finds that

"About nine of every ten divorces are uncontested.

"The average length of time between marriage and divorce is from five to six years, which may be taken to indicate a failure of personal adjustment.

"Cruelty, either alone or in combination with other causes, accounts for almost one-half of all divorces, but cruelty has been so broadened by the courts in its meaning that it has become largely a subterfuge.

"Four of every ten divorces report children affected by the decree. That is the unfortunate side of the situation. Children are involved in a considerably larger proportion of the divorces granted to husbands than in those granted to wives.

"That fact might lead to some intriguing thoughts."

The best commentary on the 1929 figures, thinks the *Richmond News-Leader*, will be the figures for 1930, because they will clarify the doubtful economic factor involved in last year's divorces. As *The News-Leader* views it,

"One could explain declining divorce in 1929 on the ground that during the early months of the year men could afford to assume alimony and indulge in new wives, or else one could argue that the stock-market collapse deprived the dissatisfied of the means of paying for divorces.

"Last year there was both abundance and shortage; this year has been altogether lean. Its divorce rate, compared with that of 1929, will show whether prosperity or depression causes more divorces."

HOWEVER, in the opinion of another Richmond paper, *The Times-Dispatch*,

"The divorce figures are not surprising. Modern people have gradually become accustomed to the prevalence of divorce.

"The problem is no longer one of social ostracism or even horrified comparison with the number of people marrying. It is now a question of the disposition of children whose parents are divorced.

"One surprising item in the statistics is that Texas should have led the country numerically in divorces.

"With 18,386 legal dissolutions of the marriage bond in that State, many of the more populous States of the North seem almost old-fashioned. New York State, containing what the provinces sometimes consider to be the modern Babylon, had only one divorce to every 23.6 marriages. The District of Columbia established the record for the country in this particular with only one divorce in every forty-nine marriages.

"Apparently, the American divorce problem is no different in quantity from that of certain European countries. Recent reports from Berlin say that one in every six marriages in Germany's capital ends in divorce, a figure practically the same as our own.

"This present year will probably show a large decrease in the number of marriages performed. The divorce total no doubt will remain as high as in 1929.

"People without prosperity hesitate to marry, but a decreased budget has no effect on the desire to obtain a divorce."