

**DIVORCE; A STUDY IN
SOCIAL CAUSATION,
PP. 343-568**

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Divorce; a study in social causation, pp. 343-568 by James P. Lichtenberger

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JAMES P. LICHTENBERGER

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DIVORCE

A STUDY IN SOCIAL CAUSATION

BY
JAMES P. LICHTENBERGER, A. M.
Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
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PREFACE

PROPORTIONATELY with the rapid increase of divorce throughout the civilized world in modern times, and particularly in the last fifty years, has the subject of divorce engaged the attention of thinking men—moralists, theologians and statesmen. For the most part, it has been apprehended as an isolated phenomenon due to specific causes and regarded as a sign of moral degeneracy. Purposive efforts to check the movement have centered in more rigid enforcement of ecclesiastical discipline and in more stringent enactments and administration of civil law. Despite these efforts the divorce rate has continued to increase with accelerated velocity.

Assuming with many students of social science that the phenomenon is rather but one aspect of a general social movement whose roots lie deep in the soil of physical and psychical processes and is not amenable, therefore, to the external forces of social control, we have pursued this investigation in order to ascertain the validity of this assumption. The conclusions set forth herein are the result.

Believing that we could contribute most to the proper understanding of the subject as a whole by an intensive study of some specific field of observation, we have limited our task to an interpretation of the facts exhibited in Continental United States for a period of forty years, 1867-1906, for which the data are most readily accessible.

Of special value have been the *History of Matrimonial Institutions* by Professor Howard, *The Divorce Problem*,

a Study in Statistics by Professor Willcox, and the Federal Reports on *Marriage and Divorce*.

Indebtedness is acknowledged gratefully to Professor Franklin H. Giddings, of Columbia University, for important suggestions made from time to time while this monograph has been in preparation, and for assistance in reading proofs, to Myra Grigg Anderson, A. M., of New York, for valuable aid in the correction of the manuscript, to Joseph A. Hill, Ph. D., of the Census Office, for the promptness and courtesy with which he has answered all my communications, and to my wife for sympathetic interest and help, but for which the completion of the work would have been delayed indefinitely.

J. P. L.

The University of Pennsylvania, September, 1909.

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