

In all the Southern States (save those just mentioned), and in the South Western States and Territories, one seeking wedlock can have at his option either a religious or a civil celebration before a minister, or a judicial officer.

In Louisiana it is not even necessary for the minister or priest to be a citizen of the United States. Louisiana is strict enough to require marriage to be solemnized in the presence of at least three witnesses all of whom must be of full age; this age limit bears hardly upon bridesmaids.

Oklahoma and Porto Rico only require two adult competent witnesses. Twenty-one of these southern commonwealths and territories do not care whether any fourth person is present or not. However, in the case of Quaker weddings in Maryland the contracting parties must sign a certificate to the effect that they have agreed to take each other for husband and wife and this has to be attested by twelve persons present.

Marriages that would have been good under the old English common law are still valid in Florida.

By a Georgia law any persons of color living together as husband and wife on March 9, 1866, had to sustain that legal relation to each other, unless indeed the man had two or more reputed wives, or the woman more than one reputed husband: if either was so blessed then he or she had to choose one consort and had to be forthwith married. Severe penalties were inflicted in case of refusal. In Georgia "marriage is encouraged by the law."

In Kentucky if a girl in her anxiety to marry does so without waiting until she is sixteen and has legal permission, the court may commit her estate to the care of a receiver to keep so long as the Court sees fit. So too, in West Virginia if the impulsive maiden marries under twelve years of age.

In Porto Rico collaterals by consanguinity may not marry within the fourth degree, unless the Court waives the impediment; first cousins may not marry in Arkansas, Arizona, Indian Territory, Louisiana, Oklahoma, or Missouri; Tennessee is the only state in this part of the Union where such good friends as aunts and nephews, uncles and nieces, are not forbidden to marry. Alabama and Mississippi still prohibit marriage with a step-father or a step-mother. Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, both Virginias and the District of Columbia do likewise and, further, will not permit marriage with a father-in-law or a mother-in-law. In South Carolina, if the bride is under sixteen and the