

legal; two in addition to the solemnizer. The other New England States do not require such publicity. The legislators of Rhode Island have never encouraged matrimony—like the other New England States have—by providing that illegitimate children may be legitimized by the marriage of their parents.

New Hampshire is the only one of the New England States sufficiently considerate of poverty and modesty to permit a man and woman to become husband and wife without the expense of banns or licence or the performer's fee; in that Granite State two persons living together and acknowledging each other as man and wife and generally reputed as such for three years (or until the death of one of them) are thereafter deemed to be legally married. Yet New Hampshire does not permit free-trade in matrimony, but forbids first cousins to marry. No other New England State prohibits this, though all forbid such unions between aunts and nephews, or uncles and nieces.

In Connecticut a man could not marry his deceased brother's wife until 1816; but he may marry his mother-in-law or a woman her father-in-law. Just fancy this while a wild Apache to avoid meeting his mother-in-law will clamber down a precipice at the risk of his life; a native of New Britain would commit suicide did he accidentally speak of his wife's mother; and an Australian almost died of fright because the shadow of his mother-in-law fell upon his legs while he slept beneath a tree, and a Caffre woman is forbidden to pronounce, even mentally, her father-in-law's name, nor is she allowed to use any word containing the emphatic syllable of his name. This privilege is not permitted in the other New England States; nor in any of them can one be legally united to a step-parent or step-child. Until some years after the beginning of the last century offenders against the law of prohibited degrees in this wooden nut-meg state were "set upon the gallows" and condemned to wear "the scarlet letter," that Hawthorne wrote so well about. In this "land of steady habits" a marriage attempted to be solemnized by an unauthorized person, whether the parties act in good faith or not, is void without decree.

A woman in this State has to wait until she is over forty-five ere she can enjoy the sweets of wedded life if she, or her intended be imbecile or feeble-minded, or a pauper. And this although Judge Deady said, "In this country, at least, it is still open to every woman however poor or humble to obtain a secure and independent position in the community by marriage." (*The Oriflamme* 3 Sawyer (U.S.) 397.)