

HOW TO GET MARRIED.

have prescribed no regulations for the celebration of matrimony, a mutual engagement to inter-marry by parties competent to make such a contract would, in a moral view, be a good marriage, and would impugn no law of the State. But when the civil government has established regulations for the due celebration of marriage, it is the duty as well as the interest of all citizens to conform to such rules." *Milford v. Worcester*, 7 Mass. 48. Another Parsons (think not, gentle reader, that the expression is ungrammatical) says: "That in all Christian communities of which we have any knowledge, and, as we suppose, in all civilized countries, certain ceremonies are prescribed for the celebration of marriage, either by express law or by a usage which has the force of law, and the question is, whether a mere consent of the parties, even with mutual promises, but without any use of or reference to any of these ceremonies, is sufficient to constitute a valid marriage." 2 Parsons on Contracts, 75.

Whenever there is a ceremony, no particular form of words and no particular actions or deeds are necessary. A simple nod of the head or bob of a curtesy in response to the fatal query will be as efficacious and as binding upon the nodder or bobber as the most sonorous "I do," or simpering "yes," accompanied by Sir Charles Grandison bows and ritualistic genuflexions: *People v. Taylor*, 1 Mete. (N. P.) 190.

A gentleman, hailing from Boston, whom we have before quoted, and who claims for himself great knowledge on this and kindred subjects, says he never knew of any case in which a mere agreement to marry, with no formality and no compliance with any law or usage regulating marriage, has actually been permitted to give both parties and their children all the rights and lay them under the obligations and liabilities, civil and criminal, of a legal union: 2 Parsons on Contracts, 79. His next sentence, however is an admission that some recent decisions of the courts seems to tend strongly in the direction which he disapproves. To some of these cases we will refer.

A man and a woman in New York State, were engaged to be married. The former entertained the notion that wedding ceremonies were vanities of vanities, empty show, vain delusions, unnecessary

expenses, in fact he did not believe in them, and expressed the desire that his lady-love would fore-go the performance, especially as the marriage without them would, to his mind, be all sufficient. The fair one hesitated—the pomps and vanities of this wicked world and the flesh pots of Egypt had strong hold on her. But at last she gave way to his wishes, and named the day which was to see these twain made one flesh. On that eventful hour they went out riding together in a carriage, and while rolling smoothly along the gent produced a ring, and placing it upon the lady's finger, said: "This is your wedding ring; we are married." She received the circle of gold as the sign of wedlock. He then further remarked: "We are married; I will live with you and take care of you all the days of my life, as my wife." She made no objection to the pleasant programme thus sketched out for her future course, and together they drove to a house where he had previously engaged board for "himself and wife." There they lived together for over a month, he treating her and speaking to her and of her as his wife. Soon—sad to relate—a change came o'er the spirit of their dreams. We seek not to lay blame at the door of either, but a divorce was sought for, and the Supreme Court of the State held and decided that this simple and uncommon marriage was perfectly valid: *Bissell v. Bissell*, 55 Barb. 325.

On the other hand, once upon a time in Scotland, after a family supper, at which, we may assume, toddy was not absent, one of the party, a jolly old bachelor, put a ring on the finger of a daughter of the house, a maiden bright and fair, saying to her, "Maggie, you are my wife before heaven; so help me, oh God!" The two kissed, the lady modestly exclaiming, "Oh, Major!" The banqueters then drank the very good health of the happy couple, and forthwith bedded them according to an old Scotch custom. In course of time the question arose, was Maggie the wife of the Major? The Court of Sessions said she was, but the final court of appeal in the kingdom took the liberty of reversing that decision, and saying she was not, upon the ground that it appeared clear to them that no real marriage was then intended, and although the ultimate maturing of matrimony was hoped for and confidently anticipated by