



ACT No. III OF 1872.

PASSED BY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL.

(Received the assent of the Governor General on the 22nd March, 1872).

An Act to provide a form of Marriage in certain cases.

WHEREAS it is expedient to provide a form of marriage for persons who do not profess the Christian, Jewish, Hindú, Muhammadan, Pársí, Buddhist, Sikh or Jaina religion, and to legalize certain marriages the validity of which is doubtful; It is hereby enacted as follows:—

Preamble.

1. This Act extends to the whole of British India, and shall come into force on the passing thereof.

Local extent. Commencement.

2. Marriages may be celebrated under this Act between persons neither of whom professes the Christian or the Jewish, or the Hindú or the Muhammadan, or the Pársí or the Buddhist, or the Sikh or the Jaina religion, upon the following conditions:—

Conditions upon which marriages under Act may be celebrated.

(1).—Neither party must, at the time of the marriage, have a husband or wife living:

(2).—The man must have completed his age of eighteen years, and the woman her age of fourteen years, according to the Gregorian calendar:

(3).—Each party must, if he or she has not completed the age of twenty-one years, have obtained the consent of his or her father or guardian to the marriage:

(4).—The parties must not be related to each other in any degree of consanguinity or affinity which would, according to any law to which either of them is subject, render a marriage between them illegal.

1st Proviso.—No such law or custom, other than one relating to consanguinity or affinity, shall prevent them from marrying.

2nd

[Price three annas and three pies.]

2nd Proviso.—No law or custom as to consanguinity shall prevent them from marrying, unless a relationship can be traced between the parties through some common ancestor, who stands to each of them in a nearer relationship than that of great-great-grandfather or great-great-grand-mother, or unless one of the parties is the lineal ancestor, or the brother or sister of some lineal ancestor, of the other.

Appointment of Marriage Registrars.

3. The Local Government may appoint one or more Registrars under this Act, either by name or as holding any office for the time being, for any portion of the territory subject to its administration. The officer so appointed shall be called 'Registrar of Marriages under Act III of 1872,' and is hereinafter referred to as 'the Registrar.' The portion of territory for which any such officer is appointed shall be deemed his district.

One of the parties to intended marriage to give notice to Registrar.

4. When a marriage is intended to be solemnized under this Act, one of the parties must give notice in writing to the Registrar, before whom it is to be solemnized.

The Registrar to whom such notice is given must be the Registrar of a district within which one at least of the parties to the marriage has resided for fourteen days before such notice is given.

Such notice may be in the form given in the first schedule to this Act.

Notice to be filed and copy entered in the Marriage Notice Book.

5. The Registrar shall file all such notices and keep them with the records of his office, and shall also forthwith enter a true copy of every such notice in a book to be for that purpose furnished to him by the Government, to be called the "Marriage Notice Book under Act III of 1872," and such book shall be open at all reasonable times, without fee, to all persons desirous of inspecting the same.

Objection to marriage.

6. Fourteen days after notice of an intended marriage has been given under section four, such marriage may be solemnized, unless it has been previously objected to in the manner hereinafter mentioned.

Any person may object to any such marriage on the ground that it would contravene some one or more

more of the conditions prescribed in clauses (1), (2), (3) or (4) of section two.

The nature of the objection made shall be recorded in writing by the Registrar in the register, and shall, if necessary, be read over and explained to the person making the objection, and shall be signed by him or on his behalf.

7. On receipt of such notice of objection the Registrar shall not proceed to solemnize the marriage until the lapse of fourteen days from the receipt of such objection, if there be a Court of competent jurisdiction open at the time, or, if there be no such Court open at the time, until the lapse of fourteen days from the opening of such Court.

Procedure on receipt of objection.

The person objecting to the intended marriage may file a suit in any Civil Court having local jurisdiction (other than a Court of Small Causes) for a declaratory decree, declaring that such marriage would contravene some one or more of the conditions prescribed in clauses (1), (2), (3) or (4) of section two.

Objector may file suit.

8. The officer before whom such suit is filed shall thereupon give the person presenting it a certificate to the effect that such suit has been filed. If such certificate be lodged with the Registrar within fourteen days from the receipt of notice of objection, if there be a Court of competent jurisdiction open at the time, or, if there be no such Court open at the time, within fourteen days of the opening of such Court, the marriage shall not be solemnized till the decision of such Court has been given and the period allowed by law for appeals from such decision has elapsed; or, if there be an appeal from such decision, till the decision of the Appellate Court has been given.

Certificate of filing of suit to be lodged with Registrar.

If such certificate be not lodged in the manner and within the period prescribed in the last preceding paragraph, or if the decision of the Court be that such marriage would not contravene any one or more of the conditions prescribed in clauses (1), (2), (3) or (4) of section two, such marriage may be solemnized.

If the decision of such Court be that the marriage in question would contravene any one or more of the conditions

conditions prescribed in clauses (1), (2), (3) or (4) of section two, the marriage shall not be solemnized.

Court may fine when objection not reasonable.

9. Any Court in which any such suit as is referred to in section seven is filed, may, if it shall appear to it that the objection was not reasonable and *bonâ fide*, inflict a fine, not exceeding one thousand rupees, on the person objecting, and award it, or any part of it, to the parties to the intended marriage.

Declaration by parties and witnesses.

10. Before the marriage is solemnized, the parties and three witnesses shall, in the presence of the Registrar, sign a declaration in the form contained in the second schedule to this Act. If either party has not completed the age of twenty-one years, the declaration shall also be signed by his or her father or guardian, except in the case of a widow, and, in every case, it shall be countersigned by the Registrar.

Marriage how to be solemnized.

11. The marriage shall be solemnized in the presence of the Registrar and of the three witnesses who signed the declaration. It may be solemnized in any form, provided that each party says to the other, in the presence and hearing of the Registrar and witnesses, 'I, [A,] take thee, [B,] to be my lawful wife (or husband).'

Place where marriage may be solemnized.

12. The marriage may be celebrated either at the office of the Registrar or at such other place, within reasonable distance of the office of the Registrar, as the parties desire: Provided that the Local Government may prescribe the conditions under which such marriages may be solemnized at places other than the Registrar's office, and the additional fees to be paid thereupon.

Certificate of marriage.

13. When the marriage has been solemnized, the Registrar shall enter a certificate thereof in a book to be kept by him for that purpose and to be called the 'Marriage Certificate Book under Act III of 1872,' in the form given in the third schedule to this Act, and such certificate shall be signed by the parties to the marriage and the three witnesses.

Fees.

14. The Local Government shall prescribe the fees to be paid to the Registrar for the duties to be discharged by him under this Act.

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The Registrar may, if he think fit, demand payment of any such fee before solemnization of the marriage or performance of any other duty in respect of which it is payable.

The said Marriage Certificate Book shall at all reasonable times be open for inspection, and shall be admissible as evidence of the truth of the statements therein contained. Certified extracts therefrom shall on application be given by the Registrar on the payment to him by the applicant of a fee to be fixed by the Local Government for each such extract.

15. Every person who, being at the time married, procures a marriage of himself to be solemnized under this Act, shall be deemed to have committed an offence under section four hundred and ninety-four or section four hundred and ninety-five of the Indian Penal Code, as the case may be; and the marriage so solemnized is void.

Penalty on married person marrying again under Act.

16. Every person married under this Act who, during the life-time of his or her wife or husband, contracts any other marriage, shall be subject to the penalties provided in sections four hundred and ninety-four and four hundred and ninety-five of the Indian Penal Code for the offence of marrying again during the life-time of a husband or wife, whatever may be the religion which he or she professed at the time of such second marriage.

Punishment of bigamy.

17. The Indian Divorce Act shall apply to all marriages contracted under this Act, and any such marriage may be declared null or dissolved in the manner therein provided, and for the causes therein mentioned, or on the ground that it contravenes some one or more of the conditions prescribed in clauses (1), (2), (3) or (4) of section two of this Act.

Indian Divorce Act to apply.

18. The issue of marriages solemnized under this Act shall, if they marry under this Act, be deemed to be subject to the law to which their fathers were subject as to the prohibition of marriages by reason of consanguinity and affinity, and the provisoes to section two of this Act shall apply to them.

Law to apply to issue of marriages under Act.

19. Nothing

Saving of marriages solemnized otherwise than under Act.

19. Nothing in this Act contained shall affect the validity of any marriage not solemnized under its provisions; nor shall this Act be deemed directly or indirectly to affect the validity of any mode of contracting marriage; but if the validity of any such mode shall hereafter come into question before any Court, such question shall be decided as if this Act had not been passed.

Registry of marriages contracted before passing of Act.

20. All persons who have heretofore contracted marriages in the presence of at least two witnesses, according to any form whatever, may at any time, previous to the first day of January 1873, have such marriages registered under this Act, and such marriages shall thereupon be deemed to be and to have been as valid as if they had been contracted and solemnized under this Act: Provided that persons who have such marriages registered under this section must, on such registry, sign a declaration in the form given in the fourth schedule to this Act.

No marriage shall be registered under this section unless conditions (1), (3) and (4) of section two were complied with; and no such marriage shall be registered under this section if, during its continuance, either party has contracted a subsequent marriage.

Penalty for signing declarations or certificates containing false statements.

21. Every person making, signing or attesting any declaration or certificate prescribed by this Act, containing a statement which is false, and which he either knows or believes to be false or does not believe to be true, shall be deemed guilty of the offence described in section one hundred and ninety-nine of the Indian Penal Code.

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Marriage.

FIRST SCHEDULE.

(See section 4).

NOTICE OF MARRIAGE.

To a Registrar of Marriages under Act III of 1872 for the District.

I hereby give you notice that a marriage under Act III of 1872 is intended to be had, within three calendar months from the date hereof, between me and the other party herein named and described (that is to say) :—

Names.	Condition.	Rank or profession.	Age.	Dwelling place.	Length of residence.
A B	Unmarried. Widower.	Landowner.	Of full age.	23 days.
C D	Spinster.	Minor.

Witness my hand, this 187 . day of

(Signed) A. B.

SECOND SCHEDULE.

(See section 10).

Declaration to be made by the Bridegroom.

I, A B, hereby declare as follows :—

1. I am at the present time unmarried :
2. I do not profess the Christian, Jewish, Hindú, Muham-
madan, Pársí, Buddhist, Sikh or Jaina religion :

3. I

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3. I have completed my age of eighteen years :

4. I am not related to *C D* [*the bride*] in any degree of consanguinity or affinity which would, according to the law to which I am subject, or to which the said *C D* is subject, and subject to the provisoes of clause (4) of section two of Act III of 1872, render a marriage between us illegal :

[*And when the bridegroom has not completed his age of twenty-one years :*

5. The consent of my father [*or guardian, as the case may be*] has been given to a marriage between myself and *C D*, and has not been revoked :]

6. I am aware that, if any statement in this declaration is false, and if in making such statement I either know or believe it to be false, or do not believe it to be true, I am liable to imprisonment, and also to fine.

(Signed) *A B* [*the bridegroom*].

Declaration to be made by the Bride :—

I, *C D*, hereby declare as follows :—

1. I am at the present time unmarried :

2. I do not profess the Christian, Jewish, Hindú, Muhamadan, Pársí, Buddhist, Sikh or Jaina religion :

3. I have completed my age of fourteen years :

4. I am not related to *A B* [*the bridegroom*] in any degree of consanguinity or affinity which would, according to the law to which I am subject, or to which the said *A B* is subject, and subject to the provisoes of clause (4) of section two of Act III of 1872, render a marriage between us illegal :

[*And when the bride has not completed her age of twenty-one years, unless she is a widow :*

5. The consent of *M N* my father [*or guardian, as the case may be*], has been given to a marriage between myself and *A B*, and has not been revoked :]

6. I am aware that, if any statement in this declaration is false, and if in making such statement I either know or believe it to be false, or do not believe it to be true, I am liable to imprisonment, and also to fine.

(Signed) *C D* [*the bride*].

Signed in our presence by the above-named *A B* and *C D* :

G H,
I J, } [*three witnesses*].
K L,

[*And*

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[*And when the bridegroom or bride has not completed the age of twenty-one years, except in the case of a widow :*

Signed in my presence and with my consent by the above-named *A B* and *C D* :

M N, the father [*or guardian*]
of the above-named *A B* (*or C D*,
as the case may be)].

(Countersigned) *E F*,

*Registrar of Marriages under Act III of 1872 for
the District of*

Dated the day of 18 .

THIRD SCHEDULE.

(See section 13).

Registrar's Certificate.

I, *E F*, certify that, on the of 18
appeared before me *A B* and *C D*, each of whom in my presence
and in the presence of three credible witnesses, whose names are
signed hereunder, made the declarations required by Act III
of 1872, and that a marriage under the said Act was solemnized
between them in my presence.

(Signed) *E F*,

*Registrar of Marriages under Act III of 1872 for the
District of*

(Signed) *A B*,

C D,

G H,
I J, } [*three witnesses*].
K L, }

Dated the day of 18 .

FOURTH SCHEDULE.

(See section 20).

Declaration to be made by the Husband.

I, *A B*, hereby declare as follows :—

1. I was married to *C D* at [*place*], on or about [*date*] in
the presence of [*two witnesses*] :

2. I was, at the time of my marriage to my wife, *C D*,
unmarried :

3. I did not at such time profess the Christian, Jewish,
Hindú, Muhammadan, Pársí, Buddhist, Sikh or Jaina religion :

4. I have not contracted any subsequent marriage :

5. I am not related to *C D* [*the wife*] in any degree of
consanguinity or affinity which would, according to the law to
which I am subject, or to which the said *C D* is subject, and

subject

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subject to the provisoes of clause (4) of section two of Act III of 1872, render a marriage between us illegal :

[*And when the bridegroom had not completed his age of twenty-one years:*

6. The consent of my father [*or guardian as the case may be*] had been given to a marriage between myself and *C D*, and had not been revoked :]

7. I am aware that, if any statement in this declaration is false, and if in making such statement I either know or believe it to be false, or do not believe it to be true, I am liable to imprisonment, and also to fine.

(Signed) *A B* [*the husband*].

Declaration to be made by the Wife:—

I, *C D*, hereby declare as follows:—

1. I was married to *A B* at [*place*], on or about [*date*] in the presence of [*two witnesses*] :

2. I was, at the time of my marriage to my husband, *A B*, unmarried :

3. I did not at such time profess the Christian, Jewish, Hindú, Muhammadan, Pársi, Buddhist, Sikh or Jaina religion :

4. I have not contracted any subsequent marriage :

5. I am not related to *A B* [*the husband*] in any degree of consanguinity or affinity which would, according to the law to which I am subject, or to which the said *A B* is subject, and subject to the provisoes of clause (4) of section two of Act III of 1872, render a marriage between us illegal.

[*And when the bride had not, at the time of her marriage, completed her age of twenty-one years, unless she was then a widow:*

6. The consent of *M N* my father [*or guardian, as the case may be*] had at such time been given to a marriage between myself and *A B*, and had not been revoked :]

7. I am aware that, if any statement in this declaration is false, and if in making such statement I either know or believe it to be false, or do not believe it to be true, I am liable to imprisonment, and also to fine.

(Signed) *C D* [*the wife*].

Signed in our presence by the above-named *A B* and *C D*:

G H,
I J, } [*two witnesses*].

(Countersigned) *E F*,

Registrar of Marriages under Act III of 1872
for the District of

Dated the day of 18 .