The 1549 Book of Common Prayer,

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THE FORME OF

Solemnization of
matrimonie.

First the bannes must be asked three several Sondays or holy days, in the service tyme, the people being presente, after the accustomed maner.

And if the persons that would be married dwell in divers parishes, the bannes must be asked in both parishes, and the curate of that parish shall not solemnize matrimonie betwixt them, without a certificate of the bannes being asked from the curate of thother parish.

At the daye appointed for Solemnization of matrimonie, the persons to be married shal come into the bodie of pe churche, with theyr frendes and neighbours. And there the priest shal thus speye.

Eerely beloved frendes, we are gathered togethuer here in the sight of God, and in the face of his congregation, to ioyne together this man, and this woman in holy matrimonie, which is an honorable estate instituted of God in paradise, in the time of mannes innocencie, signifying unto vs the mysticall union that is betwixt Christe and his Church; which holy estate, Christe adorned and beautified with his presence, and first miracle that he wrought in Cana of Galile, and is commended of Sainct Paule to be honourable among all men, and therefore is not to bee enterprised, nor taken in hande unadvisedlye, lightelye, or wantonly, to satisfie mens carnal lustes and appetites, like brute beasts that have no understanding: but reverently, discretely, advise ly, soberly, and in the feare of God. Duely consideryng the causes for the whiche matrimonie was ordained. One cause was the procreacion of children, to be brought vp in the feare and nurture of the Lord, and praye of God. Secondly it was ordained for a remedie against saine, and to aventure fornication, that suche persons as bee maried, might liue chastlie in matrimonie, and kepe themselves undefiled members of Christes bodye. Thirldelye for the mutuall societie, helpe, and comfort, that the one oughte to haue of thother, both in
Of matrimonye.

Prosperitie and aduersitie. Into the whiche holy estate these two persones present: come nowe to be ioyned. Therefore if any man can shewe any iust cause why they maie not lawfully be ioyned so together: Let him now speake, or els hereafter for ever hold his peace.

And also speaking to the persones that shalbe married, he shall saie.

I require and charge you (as you will aunswer at the dreade full daye of judgemente, when the secretes of all hartes shalbee disclosed) that if either of you doe invowe any impedimente, why ye maie not bee lawfully ioyned together in matrimonie, that ye confesse it. For be ye wel assured, that so manye as bee coupled together otherwaies then Goddes woold doeth allowe: are not ioyned of God, neither is their matrimonie lawful.

At which daye of mariage ye any man doe allege any impediment why they maie not be coupled together in matrimonie: And will be bound, 1 sureties with hym, to the parties, or els put in a caution to the full value of suche charges as the persones to bee married doe suspete, to prove his allegacion: then the Solemnization must bee deferred, unto suche tyme as the trueth bee tried. Ye no impedimente bee alleged, then shall the Curate saie unto the man.

P. wilte thou haue this woman to thy wedded wife, to liue together after Goddes oordeinaunce in the holy estate of matrimonie? Wilt thou love her, comforte her, honoe and kepe her, in sickenesse and in health? And forsaking all other kepe thee only to her, so long as you both shall liue?

The man shall aunswer,

I will.

Then shall the priest saie to the woman.

P. Wilt thou haue this man to thy wedded houfband, to liue together after Goddes oordeinaunce, in the holy estate of matrimonie? Wilt thou obey him, and serve him, love, honoe, and kepe him in sickenesse and in health? And forsaking all other kepe thee onely to him, so long as you bothe shall liue?
Of Matrimonie.

The woman shall answer,

I will.

Then shall the minister say,

Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?

And the minister receiving the woman at her father or friends hands, shall cause the man to take the woman by the right hand, and to either to give their truth to other:

The man first saying,

I 

take thee, 

to my wedded wife, to have and to hold

from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer,

for poorer, in sickness, and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us depart: according to Goddes holy ordinance: And thereto I plight thee my troth.

Then shall they loose their hands, and the woman taking again the man by the right hand shall say,

I 

take thee, 

to my wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness, and in health, to love, cherish, and to obey, till death us depart: according to Goddes holy ordinance: And thereto I give thee my troth.

Then shall they again loose their hands, and the man shall give unto the woman a ring, and other tokens of spousage, as golde or siluer, laying the same upon the book; And the priest taking the ring shall deliver it unto the man: to put it upon the fourth finger of the womans left hande. And the man taught by the priest, shall say,

With this ring I thee wed: Thy golde and silver I thee give: with my body I thee worship and withal my worldly Goods I thee endowe. In the name of the father, and of the sonne, and of the holy goste. Amen.
Of Matrimonie.

Then the man leauyng the ring vpon the fowerth finger of the womans let hande, the minister shal say,

Let vs pray.

O Eternal God creatory and preseruer of al mankinde, geuer of al spiritual grace, the author of euerlastig life: Sende thy blessing upon these thy seruauntes, thyss manne, and this woman, whome we blesse in thy name, that as Iaaac and Rebecca (after bracellets and Jewels of golde geuen of thone to thother for tokens of their matrimonie) liued faithfully together; So these persons may Surely perfourme and kepe the vowe and couenaunt betwixt them made, whereof this ring geuen, and received, is a token and pledge. And may euer remayne in perfite loue & peace together; And lyue accordyng to thy lawes; through Jesus Christe our loyte. Amen.

Then shal the priest joyn their ryght handes together, and say.

Those whome god hath ioyned together: let no man put a fundye.

Then shall the minister speake unto the people.

Of asmuche as .P. and .P. haue contented together in holpe wedlocke, & haue witnesed thesame here before god & this cumpanny; And therto haue geuen and pledged theys trouth eyther to other, and haue declared thesame by geyping and receypying golde and syluer, and by ioyning of handes: I pronounce that they bee man and wyfe together. In the name of the father, of the sonne, & of the holy goyt. Amen.

And the minister shall adde this blessing,

God the father blesse ye. God the sonne kepe ye: god the holpe goyt lighten your understanding: The loyte mercifullly with his favoure loke vpon you, & so fil you with al spiritual benediction, & grace, that you may haue remission
Of Matrimonie.

of your sinnes in this life, and in the world to come lyke everlastingly. Amen.

Then shall they goe into the quier, and the ministers or clerkes shal saye or sing, this psalme folowynge.

Blessed are all they that feare the lord, and walke in his wayes.
For thou shalt eate the labour of thy handes.
Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine, upon the walls of thy house.
Thy children like the olive branches round about thy table.
Loe, thus shalt the man be blessed, that feareth the lord.
The lord from out of Sion, shall to blesse thee: that thou shalt see Hierusalem in prosperous, all thy life long.
Peace that thou shalt see thy childrens children: and peace upon Israel.
Glory to the father, &c.
As it was in the beginning, &c.

Beati omnes Cxxviii.

Dx be merciful unto vs, and blesse vs, and shew vs the lighte of his countenaunce: and bee mercifull unto vs.

That thy waye maye bee knowne upon yearth, thy sauing health among all nations.
Let the people praise thee (o god) yea let all people praye thee.
D let the nations reioyce and be glad, for thou shalt judge the folke righteousely, and gouerne the nations upon yearth.
Leat the people praye thee (o god) leat al people praye the.
Then shal the yearth bring fouzth her increase: and god, euon our owne God, shal geue vs his blessing.
God shal blesse vs, and all the endes of the world shall feare hym.
Glory to the father, &c.
As it was in the beginning, &c.

Deus misere-atur noftri. Psalm lxvii.
Of Matrimonye.

The psalme ended, and the maune and woman kneeing afore the aulter: the prieete standing at the aulter, and turnyng his face to-warde them, shalaye.

Lo:de haue mercie vpon vs.
   Answer.
Christe haue mercie vpon vs.
   Pnifte.
Lo:de haue mercie vpon vs.
   Our father whiche art in heauen, &c.
And leade vs not into temptacion.
   Answer.
But deliuer vs from euill. Amen.
   Pnifte.
O lo:de saue thy seruaunte, and thy handmaide.
   Answer.
Whiche put they? truste in the.
   Pnifte.
O lo:de sende them helpe from thy holy place.
   Answer.
And euermore defende them.
   Pnifte.
Bee vnto them a tower of strengthe.
   Answer.
From the face of their enemie.
   Pnifte.
O lo:de heare my prayer.
   Answer.
And leate my crie come vnto the.
   The Pnifte.

Leat vs praye.

God of Abrahame, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, blesse these thy seruauntes, and owse the seede of eternall life in their mindes, that whatsoever in thy holy woord they hall profitablye learne: they may in dede fulfill the same. Looke, O Lord, mercifully vpon them from heauen, and blesse them: And as thou diddest
Of Patrimonie.

sende thy Aungell Raphaell to Thobie, and Sara, the daughter of Raguel, to their great comfort: so vouchsafe to send thy blessing upon these thy seruaunts, that thei obeyng thy wil, and alwaye beyng in safetie under thy protection: may abyde in thy love unto theye lyues ende: through Jesus Christe our Lord. Amen.

This prayer following halfe omitted where the woman is past childe byrth.

Merciful Lord, & heavenly father, by whose gracious gift mankind is increased: We beseeche thee assiste with thy blessing these two persones, that they may both be fruitful in procreation of children: and also live together so long in godlye love & honestie: that they may see their childrens children, unto the thirde and fourth generation, unto thy praise and honour: through Jesus Christe our Lord. Amen.

God whiche by thy myghtye power hast made all thinges of naughte, whiche also after other things set in order diddest appoint that out of man (created after thine own image & similitude) woman should take her beginning: & knitting them together, diddest teache, that it should never be lawful to put a sondre thofe, whomo thou by matrimonie haddest made one: O god, whiche hast consecrated the state of matrimonie, to such an excellent misterie, that in it is signified & represented the spirituall mariage and unitie betwixte Christe & his churche: Loke mercifully upon these thy seruaunts, that both this manne may love his wyfe, according to thy word, (as Christ did love his spouse the churche, who gave himself for it, loving and cherishing it even as his own flesh;) And also that this woman may be loving & amiable to her housband as Rachel, wise as Rebecca, faithful & obedient as Sara; And in al quietnes, soberiteit, and peace, bee a folower of holy
Of Matrimonie.

and godhye matrones. O lord, blesse them bothe, and graunte them to inherite thy euerlastynge kyngdome, though Jeſu Christe our Lord. Amen.

Then shal the priest blesse the man and the woman, laiyng

Almighty god, which at the beginnyng did createoure firſte parentes Adam and Eue, and dyd sanctifie and ioyne them together in mariage: Powere vpon you the rycheſſe of his grace, sanctifie and b liue y ou, t hat y e m ay p leaſe h im bothe in bodye and soule; and liue together in holy loue unto your liues ende. Amen.

Then shalbee sayed after the gospell a sermon, wherein ordinarily (as oft as there is any mariage) thoffice of man and wife shal bee declared according to holy scripture. Or if there be no sermon, the minister shal reade this that foloweth.

AL ye whiche bee maried, or whiche entende to take the holye estate of matrimonie vpon you: heare what holye scripture dooeth saye, as touchyng the duetye of housebandes towarde their wiues, and wiues towarde theym housebandes.

Saincte Paule (in his epistle to the Ephesians the fyfth chapter) doeth gene this commaundement to al maried men.

Ye housebandes loue your wiues, even as Christ loued the churche, and hathe geuen hymſelfe for it, to sanctifie it, purgeynge it in the fountayne of water, though the word, that he might make it unto himself, a gloriouſ congregacion, not hauing spot or winicle, or any such thing but that it shoule be holy & blameles. So men are bounde to love their owne wiues as their owne bodies; he that loueth his owne wife, loueth himself. For neuer did any man hate his owne flesh, but nourisheth and cheriſheth it, even as the lord doeth the congregacion, for we are members of his bodie, of his fleſh, and of his bones. For this cause shal a man leaue father and mother, and shalbe ioyned unto his wife, & they
Of Matrimonie.

two shalbe one fleše. This mistery is great, but I speake of Christ and of the congregacion. Neuerthelesse let every one of you to loue his owne wife, euen as himselfe.

Likewise the same Saint Paule (writing to the Colossians) speaketh thus to all menne that be married: Ye men, loue your wifes and be not bitter unto them.

Yeare also what Saint Peter thapostle of Christ, (which was himselfe a maried man,) sayeth unto all menne that are maried: Ye husbandes, dwel with your wifes according to knowledge: Geyng honoʒ unto the wise, as unto the weaker vessel, and as heynes together of the grace of lyfe, so that your prayers be not hindred.

Hitherto ye haue heard the duetie of the husbande toward the wise.

Nowe lykewise, ye wifes, heare and lerne your duetie toward your husbandes, euen as it is playnely set furth in holy scripture.

Saint Paul (in the forenamed epistle to the Ephesians) teacheth you thus: Ye women submit your selues unto your owne husbandes as unto the lord: for the husband is the wifes head, euen as Christ is the head of the church: And he also is the sauour of the whole bodye. Therefore as the Churche, or congregacyon, is subiecte unto Christe: So lykewise let the wifes also be in subiecyon unto their owne husbandes in all thynges. And agayn he sayeth: Let the wife reuerence her husbande. And (in his epistle to the Colossians) Sainte Paule geventh you this short lesson. Ye wifes, submit your selues unto your owne husbandes, as it is consequente in the Lorde.
Of Patrimonie.

Sainte Peter also doeth instructe you very godly, thus saying, Let wives be subject to their owne husbands, so that if any obey not the woorde, they may bee wonne without the woorde, by the conversion of the wives: While they behold your chaste conversation, coupled with fear, whose apparell let it not bee outwarde, with knyved heare, and trymmyng about with golde, either in putting on of goz-geous apparell: But let the hyd [hid] man which is in the heart, be without all corruption, so that the spirite be milde and quiete, which is a precious thing in the sight of god. For after this manner (in the olde tym) did the holy women, which trusted in God, apparell themselves, being subjecte to their own husbands: as Sara obeyed Aba-ham calling him lord, whose daughters ye are made, doing wel, and being not dismayed with any fear.

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The newe maried persones (the same daye of their mariage) must receive the holy communion.