

HOUSE No. 1323

Bill accompanying the petition of Lewis R. Sullivan that the classes of persons by whom marriage may be solemnized be restricted. Joint Judiciary. March 13.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighteen.

AN ACT

Relative to the Persons Authorized to Perform the Marriage Ceremony.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section thirty of chapter one hundred and
2 fifty-one of the Revised Laws is hereby amended by
3 striking out all after the word "town", in the tenth
4 line, down to and including the word "resides", in the
5 sixteenth line, — so as to read as follows: — *Section 30.*
6 A marriage may be solemnized in any place within this
7 commonwealth by a minister of the gospel, ordained
8 according to the usage of his denomination, who resides
9 in this commonwealth and continues to perform the
10 functions of his office; by a rabbi of the Israelitish faith,
11 duly licensed by a congregation of said faith established
12 in this commonwealth, who has filed with the clerk or

13 registrar of the city or town in which he resides a certi-
14 ficate of the establishment of the synagogue, the date of
15 his appointment thereto and of the term of his engage-
16 ment; by a justice of the peace if he is also clerk or
17 assistant clerk of a city or town; and it may be solemn-
18 ized among Friends or Quakers according to the usage
19 of their societies; but no person shall solemnize a
20 marriage in this commonwealth unless he is able to read
21 and write the English language.

1 SECTION 2. Said chapter one hundred and fifty-one of
2 the Revised Laws is hereby amended by striking out
3 section thirty-one.

1 SECTION 3. Section thirty-four of the said chapter
2 one hundred and fifty-one is hereby amended by striking
3 out the words "a person who professes to be a justice of
4 the peace", in the first and second lines, — so as to read
5 as follows: — *Section 34.* A marriage which is solemnized
6 by a minister of the gospel or a rabbi or which is solemn-
7 ized among Friends or Quakers according to their usages
8 shall not be void, nor shall the validity thereof be in any
9 way affected by want of authority in such person or
10 society, or by an omission or by informality in the
11 manner of entering the intention of marriage, if the
12 marriage is in other respects lawful and is consummated
13 with a full belief of either of the persons so married
14 that they have been lawfully married.