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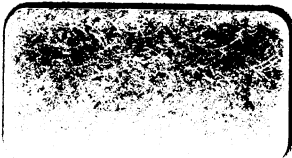
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About woman, love, and marriage

Frederick
Saunders



ANNEX DIVISION

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ABOUT

WOMAN, LOVE, AND MARRIAGE.

BY F. SAUNDERS,

AUTHOR OF "SALAD FOR THE SOLITARY," "SALAD FOR THE
SOCIAL," "MOZAICS," "FESTIVAL OF SONG," ETC.

"By my troth,
That fond old theme hath such sweet music in 't,
It holds alike spell-bound, both youth and age."



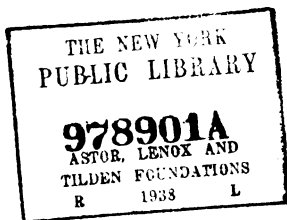
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A P R O P O S ,

Of our Title, — is it not both piquant and picturesque, — eminently suggestive of pleasant things, — things that never can become trite, or “weary, stale, flat and unprofitable?” What more beautiful combination could be devised than “Woman, Love and Marriage”? Like the triple Graces, they seem to be lovingly grouped together, in sisterly embrace, shedding lustre upon each other, and charming us as much by their harmony as by their beauty and their worth. — For are they not among the most beneficent ministrants of our purest pleasures, as well as the most potent of incentives to the noblest virtues? Like the mystic wire that now begirds the globe, do not these golden links — “Woman, Love and Marriage,” encircle as with an electric chain, our common humanity? So, also, like Faith, Hope and Charity, are they bound together by an indissoluble law of affinity, in hallowed relationship; while any attempt to divorce them, would be not only an act of violence to the instincts of our nature, but an irretrievable disaster alike to our moral, as our social economy. The heresy that would seek to ignore or annul the Divine institute of Marriage, would expose without defence the honor and happiness of woman; for the Palladium of both is secured alone in that sacred rite. The question of the decline of marriage, — now so much talked about, — is of

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vital importance, not merely to society at large, but of paramount concern to woman, since it involves the greatest interest of her life. Under the conviction, therefore, that its issue is placed mainly within her own control, the question, why do not women marry? is submitted in the form of an appeal to woman herself. Laudation enough has hitherto been rendered to the "lords of creation;" it shall be our endeavor, in the chivalrous spirit of knight-errantry, to enter the lists on behalf of those who govern those "lords,"—for if the one class rule by the head, the other certainly do by the heart. To the unmarried portion of the sex, at least, the subject proposed to be discussed can scarcely fail of awakening interest, since—being the great event of woman's life,—it simply urges the adoption of an admitted prerogative and duty. The right to a good husband, whenever she can find one, is undoubtedly, of all "Woman's Rights," the most indefeasible and the greatest; as it is, also, hers to make him—when secured—as happy as his nature will admit of. For whatever disclosures and suggestions, in the elucidation of the subject, we may, in our sovereign wisdom, feel called upon to make in the following pages—it well becomes our prudence to bespeak, at the very outset, the kindly courtesy and candor of the fair reader. And, as it is not the design of the present essay to indulge in any solemn homiletics, but rather to suggest what we may in as pleasant and genial a manner as possible—occasionally wandering "from grave to gay, from lively to severe,"—we trust that the intent will not be found marred in the effort.

I.
CONCERNING CELIBACY.



CONCERNING CELIBACY.



HAT "the proper study of mankind, is man," we do not, of course, dispute, for it is an excellent thing to be well acquainted with oneself; yet we opine, that the *common* study of mankind will be found to be, woman: and, provided the subject be properly pursued, a right pleasant and profitable theme will it prove to the student. The study of woman, — albeit it may be occasionally like that of the occult sciences, — enveloped in subtle mystery, taxing somewhat severely our skill and patience, — is yet fraught with excellent lessons to us of heroic

virtue, patient endurance, fidelity, and inextinguishable devotion.

Women have been facetiously compared to comets; — comets are eccentric, beautiful, incomprehensible, — so are women; comets shine with peculiar splendor and lustre — at night, — so do women; comets confound the most astute and learned, — so do women: comets and women, therefore, are closely analogous; and we can but gaze with equal admiration and wonder at their mystery and brilliancy. But a truce to this strain, or we may, perchance, unwittingly provoke a controversy not exactly german to our topic; and more especially as we are counselled by a sage authority against spinning *yarns* among *silks* and *satins*, lest we become *worsted* and *twisted*, and ultimately *wound up*. It is wise, therefore, to look well to our syllables in dilating upon so delicate a subject. It has been said that while Adam was created without Paradise, Eve emanated from within the sacred enclosure; and that while the former, consequently, always retained somewhat of the original earthiness of his ori-

gin, — woman — “ the precious porcelain of human clay ” — exhibits more of the refining element, both physically and morally. The estimate has met with general acceptation in civilized life ; and the history of woman in all ages has but verified her claim to the distinction. Yet, notwithstanding the almost universal homage accorded to the sex, the voice of irony and slander will sometimes strike upon the ear, — like a false note in music, — for example, it has been ungraciously insinuated that since Eve traces her origin to a rib, — and nobody ever saw one quite straight, — it is absurd to expect to find her daughters to be otherwise than a little crooked ; and that since we cannot alter the constitution of things, — cannot make crooked things straight, — we must take them for what they are worth. We, of course, protest against the calumny ; since it is equally absurd to expect perfection, even in the “ best regulated families,” because Eve and her fair representatives lost that, and Eden together. And, indeed, it is all the better for such weak, erring mortals as we

men are, that woman is given to us as she is, —

“A creature, not too bright or good
 For human nature’s daily food—
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.”

Yes, notwithstanding the pleasing and tormenting delusions they sometimes practise upon us, who will dare deny that they are the “queens of society,” whose empire is the heart, whose sceptre is love, and whose crown is peerless beauty. Let cynics, if they will, satirize her weaknesses and foibles; it is far from our purpose to indulge in a diatribe upon what are called her defects, rather would we lingeringly admire her manifold excellences,—

“And humbly, on our bended knee,
 Acknowledge her supremacy.”

Of all the tributes ever paid to woman’s worth, by pen of poet,—and they have been neither few nor small,—a single line of Scotia’s

faunous bard is the most complete and comprehensive,—

“What signifies the life o’ man, an’ ’twere not for the
lasses, O?”

If, as Shakspeare has affirmed, “they are *the* books,”—and who interprets human nature so well as he?—then ought we most diligently to study them. “Aye,” says the author of “*Summaries of Thought*,”—“the study of woman, is the study of the winds; who shall resolve the laws that govern them?” Thackeray, whose authority none will question,—confesses that a man only begins to know woman as he grows old. “I say, I know women. I mean I know that I don’t know them. Every single woman I ever knew is a puzzle to me,—as I have no doubt she is to herself. Say they are not clever? Their hypocrisy is a perpetual marvel to me, and a constant exercise of cleverness of the finest sort. You see a demure-looking woman perfect in all her duties, constant in house-bills and shirt-buttons,

obedient to her lord, anxious to please him in all things; silent, when you and he talk politics, or literature, or balderdash together, and, if referred to, saying with a smile of perfect humility, — “O, women are not judges upon such matters, we leave learning and politics to men.”

“Her smiles, her submission, her good humor, — for all which we value her, — what are they but admirable duplicity? We expect falsehood from her, and order and educate her to be dishonest.

* * * *

“It was we, who made laws for women, who, we are in the habit of saying, are not so clever as we are. As I grow old, and consider these things, I know which are the stronger — men or women; but which are the cleverer, I doubt.”

Since so noted an artist confesses himself foiled in his attempt at analysis, we may well be excused any further scrutiny into so inexplicable a mystery. One of the old dramatists says, “sing of the nature of woman, and the song shall be surely full of variety, — old

crochets and most sweet closes, — it shall be humorous, grave, fantastic, amorous, melancholy, sprightly, — one in all, and all in one !” But leaving woman as Adam found her, — the sweet and predestined mistress of the affections, — let us nestle a little closer to the heart of our subject, and consider those miscarried destinies — her unmarried sisterhood.

That so many do indeed remain unmarried may well provoke surprise, — not unmingled with the gentle urgencies of remonstrance. If, on the one part — “to love, be the law of woman’s life, and to be loved, her reward,” — few, it might be surmised, of the other sex, would be inclined to deny her so felicitous a destiny. It cannot surely be from any erroneous teaching of some of the Fathers of the early Church, who insisted upon the superior merit of celibacy, and who were even so far lost to all sense of propriety, as to assert that “woman is the devil’s bird-lime to enslave men” ! The ungracious doctrine did not, — as it ought not — work to their own comfort, however, as the legends of St. Anthony and St.

Keven, as well as the dark chronicles of their monastic system, sufficiently inform us.

The question, for the present, however, we commit to the tender consideration of the parties most interested; proposing to recur to it hereafter, when the various lines of inquiry suggested by it, shall have been followed out to their several conclusions.

The "Spinster" sisterhood has been classified into the following varieties, — the Involuntary and the Invincible. The first-named order may be said to include all who have passed beyond the boundary line, within which marriage is supposed to be attainable. Such mystery, however, envelopes this limitation of eligibility, that any attempt to fix the precise age would puzzle the most astute. Enough if we leave to these disappointed ones the consciousness, if not the rewards, of well-doing. They have, doubtless, done their best to escape their isolation; some may have coned over the mystic page of astrological lore, or sought aid from dreams, or the charms and divinations of necromancy, — yet all in vain! They may have cherished a

firm faith in the potency of love-philters, potions and powders, — or trusted to true-lover's-knots, or, it may be, they have plucked the petals of the daisy, appealed poetically to the moon, or the star of destiny; yet alas! no response has rewarded their appeal, — no Sibylline oracle has spoken! Even that good tutelary — St. Valentine — has ungraciously ignored their claims, and passed them by in piteous neglect! If, in fine, they have danced and sung in vain, smiled and beguiled to no purpose, their case, indeed, affords a signal illustration of the blindness and obduracy of fortune. If we have much love for this class, we have little for the next — the Invincibles. “One such woman is equal to a thousand plagues, — among them the tongue of the adder, and the ‘tooth of Time’ hiss and gnaw at each other.” These have chosen their estate — to be left alone, — and there we are content to leave them; only occasionally heeding to smile at their harmless vituperation of the opposite sex. As a specimen of the kind of declamation in which they excel, we extract a few passages of a letter, said to be from a maid-

en aunt to her niece, on her projected marriage, which got into print, by the agency of the veracious *Punch*.*

← * "I should ill acquit myself of the duties of an aunt — were I to see you ready to throw yourself into a bottomless pit, and never so much as scream to save you. I had hoped that my lessons of morality would have taught you better things. I do not dispute that men may be necessary in the world; but at the best, they are only necessary evils. It is thus that every really sensible woman should consider them. In the vulgar attributes of brutes, — mere muscular strength — they are certainly our superiors; but how immeasurably beneath us are they in all that constitutes true greatness — in delicacy, liberality, tenderness, friendship, fortitude and taciturnity! And in their hypocrisy, they confess as much; for they call us angels — (though, I am proud to say, no man ever so insulted *my* understanding), yes, angels, that they may make us slaves. How any woman can read the marriage ceremony without having her eyes opened to the real intentions of the creatures, is to me most wonderful. Love, honor and obey! My blood boils to think of it! To the ears of a sensible woman every syllable rattles like a dog-chain! I did think that, taught by my precept and example, you would as soon have put your finger into a rat-trap, as a wedding-ring. I did believe that you would consider all the fine things that men utter as nothing more than the false notes of a bird-catcher; mere sounds to bring our free minds 'from the heaven of high thoughts, as some poet

The sister of Fielding was, indeed, ungenerous in affirming that, "old maids are only mischievous, like monkeys, for want of employment!" She had, like many others, doubtless, been imposed upon by evil-disposed persons, who insinuate that the sisterhood are prone to scandal, tale-bearing, prying curiosity and carping ill-will; and that their affections are for the most part, devoted to cats and the canine species, to cockatoos and even to old china and crockery. Most probably these slanderous charges are traceable to disappointed, crusty old bachelors, and therefore to be received with great caution and allowance. At any rate, we can vouch for the noble self-denial and charity which characterize the many belonging to the class of the unmarried. One of the sex has

says, and shut 'em up in cages. How women can listen to a jargon of loves and doves, is very melancholy to think of. A woman of really strong mind hates Cupid as she hates cockroaches. Nevertheless, I can sympathize with human infirmity. Everybody is not born to keep a heart of virgin ice that, pressed as it may be, no pressing can melt." —

spoken out bravely on their behalf, — and asks why we should brand celibacy in a woman, and pardon it in a man? Does an old bachelor present a better account of himself than an old maid? Her isolation represents to us a virtue or a misfortune; his — a crime. Disappointed love, or devotion to her parents, may often be the cause of her remaining unmarried; it is not involuntary with him. How often is she seen hovering like a guardian angel over the couch of sickness and bereavement, of penury and suffering!

“Has she not a mission,” asks one of her sex — “who bears the nervous ill-humors of wives and mothers? Who takes care of the children when they are teething, and sits up with them all night through the scarlet-fever and measles? Who mends the stockings, and plays for the young folks; — who stays at home with the baby, while the mother is off to the theatre? Who, but the despised ‘old maid?’”

“The cases of those who remain unmarried from choice, and of those who do so against their will and inclination, are indeed, totally different;

the former being satisfied and at ease, while the latter acquire the discontented look, the index of that discontent which is falsely said to characterize the whole spinster sisterhood. For it is unquestionable, that nowhere can we meet with more kind-hearted, happier, and more intelligently contented women, than among those, who, from different motives, have *chosen* to remain single, instead of encountering the arduous task, the unceasing toil and anxiety, which attend the votaries of Hymen. Why so many unmarried women are unhappy is not because they are old maids, but in consequence of the difficulty they encounter in maintaining a decent position in society."

Having thus summarily disposed of our fair friends, the "spinsters"—the *matchless*; we may be allowed a few words respecting those whom the "fell Destroyer" has despoiled of their partners in life,—the widows. The subject is a fascinating one, and likely to beguile us by its witchery unless we watch our wayward pen. The elder Weller, who warns his impressible son against their wiles, and affirms that "one

vidder is equal to twenty-five single women ;” — seems to have had rather severer experience than is usual in the matter. Widows are said to be dangerous from the fact that they know so much of the weak and vulnerable points of the other sex ; and are, therefore, always on the offensive. They are accomplished in the art of “managing a man ;” and their finesse, cunning and adroitness in all affairs of the heart, are unequalled. Here is a life-like sketch of a first-class widow, by a poetic pen :

“She is modest, but not bashful, free and easy, but not bold, —
 Like an apple ripe and mellow, not too young, and not too old ;
 Half inviting, half repulsive, now inviting, now too shy ;
 There is mischief in her dimple, there is danger in her eye.
 She can tell the very moment when to sigh, and when to smile, —
 Oh, a maid is sometimes charming, but a widow all the while.
 Are you sad? how very serious will her handsome face become ;
 Are you angry? — She is wretched, lovely, friendless, tearful, dumb ;
 Are you mirthful? how her laughter, silver-sounding, will ring out, —

She can lure, and catch, and play you, as the angler does the trout!"

We hear sometimes about beauty in tears, and "widows' weeds," but what are these to the bold expedient of the Orientals? When an Arab woman intends to marry a second time, she goes to the grave of her first husband to propitiate him, — praying him not to be angry or jealous, pouring two goat-skins of water on his grave to cool him under the irritating circumstances about to transpire. It is a happy thing that widows are not always weeping over what cannot be helped; and that after the dark storm-cloud of sorrow, comes the bright sunshine of smiles over woman's sweet face, again. And what is more bewitching to us poor mortals, than the fascinations of woman's smile, even through her tears? Widows are said to be designing, and sophisticated; they have lost in matrimonial experience that simplicity which is so charming in women. But, then, it is to be admitted that their sophistries and stratagems are so ingeniously practised, frequently amount-

ing to the art which conceals art, — “as to seem like the most ingenuous simplicity; their manners are unembarrassed — their conversation free from reserve. They do not often say “no,” when they mean “yes;” above all, they have an enchanting habit of meeting one half-way — nay, of occasionally advancing the first half.”

As to old bachelors we shall suffer the less embarrassment in dealing with their case; they belong to a sex that can receive, as well as give — hard knocks. While we intend to do them ample justice, yet fealty to truth demands that we file a bill of impeachment against them in the high court of Cupid, requiring them to show cause why sentence should not be pronounced against them for sundry and divers infractions of the law.

For the sake of convenience we shall sum up the various counts, noted in our brief against the parties aforesaid, in one general indictment, to wit, — failing to comply with the requisitions of the marriage act. It is a generally received axiom, that every old bachelor is responsible for

one old maid ; and if he be hale and strong — long-lived, — for two ; and it is right that he should be held strictly to his accountability. It has been urged as a plea for arrest of judgment in the case, that, according to the Malthusian theory bachelors are to be justified in their non-compliance with the statute, because, it is owing to the celibacy of some, that marriage is so well sustained as it is. However specious and plausible this may appear at first sight, it is but a cunning device to evade a responsible duty ; and to admit it in any instance would be a precedent for every other, which would, of course, be inexpedient. In the case of involuntary maidenhood large allowance ought undoubtedly to be made ; they are even entitled to respect and honor, for they represent the vestal bridesmaids of the nation. Quite otherwise is it with the old bachelor.

“ It is, indeed, a sheer assumption,” as a friend observes, “ on the part of the bachelor, that he has a right to dispose of himself otherwise than in marriage. He has no right to defeat the evident intentions of nature ; no

right to indulge his own caprice at the expense of another's happiness. Men and women, — like the two shells of an oyster, — were created for each other." Franklin compared a bachelor to the odd half of a pair of scissors; very significant of his utility in society, is it not? Dickens' description of the character is no less complimentary; he says, "He is cross, cadaverous, odd, and ill-natured; never happy but when he is miserable; and always miserable when he had the best reason to be happy. The only real comfort of his existence seemed to be, to make everybody about him wretched. If he hated one thing more than another, it was a child; his antipathies included old women, and doors that would not shut!"

Characters like these are strange wandering fires that have no fixed spheres, serve no known law in the moral universe, — the purposes of their existence being a mystery alike to themselves and to all about them.

Oh, thou voluntary exile from the felicities of Home! thou waif and stray upon the sea of life, — what a weary waste of existence is thine!

There is not a thing in the whole wide domain of nature but becomes thy teacher, — the birds, the beasts and even the sweet flowers rebuke thy solitariness. But if callous to all appeals of nature, and insensible to the oratory of woman's eyes, and the finer eloquence of woman's worth, what shall be the reward of thy obtuseness and selfishness, but the frowns instead of the approving smiles of the sex thus neglected!

The bachelor boasts of his pleasures and independence, of his gaiety and exemption from care; but his flattering delusion is soon dispelled, it does not endure through wintry weather. Supreme selfishness is isolation, and isolation is an infraction of that social law which links the whole human family in the bonds of a common fraternity; none, therefore, can offend against this law with impunity. Our pleasures are enhanced, and our sorrows are lessened or appeased by this universal law of sympathy and love. With Mary Howitt, we say: —

“ Away with the pleasure that is not partaken
There is no enjoyment by one only taken;

I love, in my mirth to see gladness awaken
On lips, and in eyes that reflect it again."

These *singular* men, having outlawed themselves from all the true and tender endearments of the conjugal estate, endeavor to persuade themselves that they possess the pleasures of life, and escape all its cares, by thus resisting the instinct of nature, but the delusion mocks them at last. Thackeray remarks, "One of the great benefits a man may derive from women's society is, that he is bound to be respectful to them. Our education makes us the most eminently selfish; — we fight for ourselves, we push for ourselves, we yawn for ourselves, we light our pipes, and say — we wont go out, — we prefer ourselves, and our ease; and the greatest good that comes to a man from a woman's society is, that he has somebody beside himself to think of."

"Bachelor's Fare," is a phrase often boasted of in pleasantry, but would you know what it really is? read the following graphic description:—

— “The bachelor’s morning is weary and sad,
 His bread is ill-toasted, his butter is bad;
 His coffee is cold and his shoes are not brushed,
 Breakfast thus leaves him hungry and flushed.
 He comforts himself for his sorrows, by thinking,
 At dinner, at least, he’ll have eating and drinking, —
 “Good ale and beefsteak no misfortune can hinder,” —
 But the steak, when brought up, is found burnt to a cinder!
 He tugs at the bell-pull, by fury inspired,
 To lecture the landlady till he is tired;
 But she takes precious care to be out of the way,
 When she thinks that her lodger has something to say.

* * * * *
 “Between yawning and nodding, the time passes away,
 And tea comes at last, after weary delay;
 Now surely the Fates will relent at his lot,
 And allow him “the cup that inebriates not.”
 Alas, no! to his sorrow, no tea will pour out,
 For a host of tea-leaves have got fixed in the spout;
 And before he can clear out the obdurate stopper,
 The tea is as cold as the bread and the butter.

* * * * *
 “No longer the course of misfortune we trace;
 But we thought we could draw from his pitiful case,
 A moral as plain as if Æsop had shown it,
 ‘Get a snug little house, and a wife of your own in’t.’” —

In “*Salmagundi*” we have, portrayed to the life, the eccentricities and oddities of those “odd fellows” of the olden time. Irving says,

of them, in his quaint and humorous way, —
“They are, notwithstanding, still warm candidates for female favor ; look venerably tender, and repeat over and over the same honeyed speeches and sugared sentiments to the little belles, that they poured so profusely into the ears of their mothers. I beg leave here to give notice, that by this sketch, I mean no reflection on old bachelors ; on the contrary, I hold that, next to a fine lady,—the *ne plus ultra*, an old bachelor is the most charming being upon earth ; inasmuch as by living ‘ in single blessedness,’ he, of course, does just as he pleases ; and if he has any genius, must acquire a plentiful stock of whims and oddities and whale-bone habits ; without which I esteem a man to be mere beef without mustard, good for nothing at all, but to run on errands for ladies, take boxes at the theatre, and act the part of a screen at tea-parties, or a walking-stick in the streets. I merely speak of those old boys who infest public walks, pounce upon ladies from every corner of the street, and worry, and frisk, and amble, and caper before, behind, and

round about the fashionable belles, like old ponies in a pasture, striving to supply the absence of youthful whim and hilarity, by grimaces and grins, and artificial vivacity. I have sometimes seen one of these 'reverend youths' endeavoring to elevate his wintry passions into something like love, by basking in the sunshine of beauty; and it did remind me of an old moth attempting to fly through a pane of glass towards a light, without ever approaching near enough to warm itself, or scorch its wings."

One of the old dramatists, Beaumont, has enshrined this thought in these beautiful lines: —

"The bleakest rock upon the loneliest heath,
Feels in its barrenness some touch of spring;
And in the April dew, or beam of May,
Its moss and lichen freshen and revive;
And thus the heart, most seared to human pleasure,
Melts at the tear, — joys in the smile of woman."

It is difficult to hit off any very marked characteristics of the bachelor tribe, from the absence in them of an apposition of lights and shadows, — like a landscape enveloped in darkness, —

they cannot be painted for want of light in them, — their sombre tints need to be relieved by corresponding touches of light. In other words, his characteristics are subjective rather than objective; moral, rather than physical.

But, as we have already said, we wish to be just, as well as judicial, in our estimate of unmarried men; and it must be confessed, the types of character which we have suggested are not of the most flattering kind. That there are others of an opposite caste, who would add lustre to any department of life, cannot be denied. We might instance Washington Irving, a name that is the synonym for all that is genial, graceful and good-hearted, as well as nobly illustrative of American letters.

We all know, how, from loyalty to the memory of the lady of his love, — whom death snatched from his embrace, — he dedicated his subsequent days to a life of celibacy; although for half a century he became the idol of the literary and fashionable saloons of the Old World as well as the New.

Another notable instance of virtuous bachelor-

hood, also, was his prototype, Goldsmith, whose brilliant genius seems to shine out but the more resplendently from the dark background of his career of privation and suffering. Then, there was poor Collins, — the bard who sang so sweetly of our human passions, — who, in addition to the penalties he had to endure from adverse fortune, suffered also from the pangs of unrequited love. We think of Thomson, who hymned to us the Seasons and their change, in such musical measures, — although he, perhaps, was too much enamored of his “*Castle of Indolence*,” to think of loving any object more fair and fascinating. We might, also, refer to the exemplary bard of Olney, whose ethical lines so deservedly live in the heart of our Christian civilization; or, to the gentle “*Elia*,” whose self-denial, and devotion to his poor sister, were so noble. But it is needless to multiply instances.

Others, scarcely less noteworthy, belonging to the estate of celibacy, might be cited, who, if anything could, would seem to shed a halo of glory over it; but such characters would, doubt-

less, have been equally illustrious had they been married. There have been others, again, who, though not crowned with the chaplet of fame, yet should be classed in the category. Such as apologetically plead that they are married to their books, or their easel, their laboratory, or work-shop, — and that, having given their hearts to their favorite pursuits, they, of course, have them not to bestow elsewhere. We, perchance, might accept the graceful apology, in consideration of the good service they contribute to science or song, yet the equivocal compliment to the sex is none the less patent to *them*, and we must leave it to the parties respectively, to settle the matter between themselves.

When we encounter a confirmed bachelor, of well-balanced character, kindly in his sympathies and benevolence, and divested of the narrow selfishness which too often characterizes his order, we can hardly find it in our heart to visit his criminal delinquency with great severity. Single-blessedness may have suited the forementioned parties, because they were ambi-

tious of nothing beyond it; it may be all that its advocates claim for it; but it stands to reason, if we cannot have too much of a good thing, compound blessedness must be much better. We are gregarious beings; so constituted morally and physically, that we derive our completest happiness from congenial, social intercourse. Our pleasures are not only multiplied as we share them with those we love and esteem, but our own enjoyment of them is also thereby intensified. There seems to be a tacit admission of this even among most old bachelors. They are by no means superior to the weaknesses they affect to despise, or invulnerable to shafts from the quiver of Cupid.

“I have seldom met with an old bachelor,” writes Irving, “who had not, at some time or other, some trait of romance in his life, to which he looks back with fondness, and about which he is apt to grow garrulous occasionally. He recollects himself as he was at the time, young and gamesome; and forgets that his hearers have no idea of the hero of the tale, but such as he may appear at the time of telling

it,—peradventure, a withered, whimsical, spindle-shanked old gentleman. With married men, it is true, this is not so frequently the case; their amorous romance is apt to decline after marriage; why, I cannot for the life of me imagine. But with a bachelor, though it may slumber, it never dies. It is always liable to break out again in transient flashes, and never so much as on a spring morning in the country; or, on a winter evening, when seated in his solitary chamber, stirring up the fire and talking of matrimony.”

Your gay bachelor of forty winters or upwards, thinks sometimes of lost chances of domestic happiness in the past, and of what sort of destiny is before him,—what is to become of him in sickness and old age; he is looking for some other lodging for his heart to live in, besides an inn. He is tired of his solitary chamber, of looking at his own disconsolate face in the glass, and longs for some smiling visage to keep him in countenance. His drafts upon the storehouse of memory may be very pleasing narcotics, but dreams do not

meet his case ; he needs something more substantial to live upon, something to minister to his present necessities.

Let us, in taking our leave of our quondam friends, the bachelors, express the hope that but few are of the incorrigible caste, — so far gone astray from the ways of rectitude and propriety, — so lost to all moral sense and self-respect, as to be utterly insensible to all remonstrance and appeal : and that some gentle spirits among the senior sisterhood will be induced to compassion-ate them, and scatter a little glad sunshine over their hitherto dreary solitude, — will take them into training, and reclaim them to allegiance to social civilization. So that, if even any crusty, rusty old blades, long laid on the shelf, and deemed beyond all redemption, should thus become owned and polished, their dullness removed and their temper improved, — a new edge being given to their wits, — they may hereafter cut their way through life with comparative ease and comfort ; and thus become, if not ornamental, at any rate, useful, in our social economy.



Let all, in fine, remember Benedict's confession and recantation of his ridicule of matrimony, where he says: "I may chance have some old quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage; but doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he can not endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humor? no! when I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it, and therefore, never flout at me for what I have said against it—for man is a giddy thing—and this is my conclusion." What has thus been said in pleasant raillery or sober earnest, may we not hope, will have the effect that is said to have attended the discourse on love, by Socrates, when he pressed his point with so much earnestness and success, that all bachelors in his audience took the resolution forthwith to marry?

The most effectual way to curb a wild young man, it is suggested, is to *bridal* him; and if the gordian knot be well tied, he will be transported for life — a consummation devoutly to be wished. And if the golden chains of wedlock link so much happiness with the destiny of the one sex, why should it fail with the other? Shakspeare is our oracle upon most subjects, and he tells us that

“ Earthly happier, is the rose distilled,
Than ~~rust~~, which, withering on the parent thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies,— in single blessedness.”



II.
THE RULING PASSION.

(48)



THE RULING PASSION.

“Oh, Love, the dearest theme of all,
The oldest of the world's old stories, —
A fairer fate can ne'er befall
A poet, than to sing thy glories!”



AND who has not attuned his heart, —
if not his lyre — to the melody of its
praise? Has not the sweet song been
reverberating through the long proces-
sion of the ages, ever since the birth of
Time? And is it not as full of richest
music now, as when the primal pair first chant-
ed the beautiful chorus amid the fair bowers of
Paradise? What the great poet has said of
the beauty of the rare Egyptian queen, may

well be affirmed of it — “Age cannot wither it, nor custom stale its infinite variety !” Coincident with the history of the human heart, — like that ever-enduring story of weal and woe, it can never become obsolete, or lose aught of its thrilling interest or persuasive power. Its perpetuity is the proof of its potency ; while the magic of the passion has “garnished prison walls with garlands, and, like the sun of old, drawn hidden harmonies from the very flint.”

All thoughts, all passions, all delights, —
Whatever stirs this mortal frame, —
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame !

Love has inspired full many a poet with the true Promethean fire, and won glowing tributes from minstrel, troubadour and bard of every age and clime. It has enlisted knightly plume and lance in contest for the honor of its smile. “Take Love away,” writes Southey, “and not only physical nature, but the heart of the moral world would be palsied.”

“This is the salt unto humanity that keeps it sweet!”

Eros, or Cupid, as the classics styled him, but who is more generally known to us by his Christian name, Love,—is a genius, — more potent and universal in his sway than the mightiest of monarchs ; he is indeed, the conqueror of conquerors, and the controller of dynasties, ruling with an absolute dominion all orders and conditions of humanity. Like Justice, Love is supposed to be blind ;

“Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind ;
And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind.”

And although his votaries are, for the most part, liable to suffer from a similar calamity, yet, by a law of compensation, he is said to lend a precious seeing to the eye, — an introspection, that can fathom the deep mysteries of the heart, and interpret their meaning. This ophthalmic weakness has an air of eccentricity about it — it so nearly resembles mental obliquity that its subject not unfre-

quently, in his eager anxiety to obtain the possession of another, actually loses possession of himself. As we said, all classes are liable to the pleasing malady of love-sickness; and despite our best precautions against its attack, it is sure to overtake us sometime or other; but most usually in the springtide of life. As with some other maladies that flesh is heir to, it is all the worse when it comes late in life.

The concomitants of the disease are easily discernible, and may be described as follows: absence of mind, scrupulous exactness as to personal appearance, a strange proclivity for lunar observations, a sentimental caste of countenance, loss of appetite, highly nervous excitability, etc. All the moral faculties and feelings seem to succumb to the absorbing passion. The case, desperate as it may appear, is not, however, beyond the reach of cure; — the poor sentimental sufferer finds sure relief in the true specific — matrimony. That is the panacea for all the Protean forms of this universal complaint, which, in its most virulent stage, — like typhus fever, — tends to insanity, and plays

such fantastic tricks with our poor human nature.

Falling in love, as it is conventionally phrased, is an old established custom, and one that is likely to continue in spite of the mutations of Fashion, which rule us so absolutely in most other things. Luckily it has escaped the fate of many of those time-honored usages, which the advanced minds of our modern civilization have demolished; and, — being as lawful as eating and drinking — when properly indulged, — is sure to prevail. “The grave, sententious Johnson yielded to love, and loved on to a mature age — how ardently and truly few can say, — a wife older than himself. He always kept the anniversary of her death in seclusion, and loved her memory, as he loved her living. Sir Samuel Romily, one of the best and greatest of modern lawyers, — a great and good man, indeed — loved so deeply, that on his wife’s death, he could not endure the loss, but destroyed himself! We must all — being men and women — fall in love and go a courting. Granted: but there is a method

even in this, — let us fall in love wisely and well.* Falling in love is a serio-comic business; for instance, a student leaves college, covered with academic honors, and not a stir in his affections, excepting for his kith and kin; but a fair maiden passes him on his way, and straightway he loses his heart — the victim of a glance from a sunny face. A learned metaphysician, apparently lost to all external things, by his abstract studies, walks out from his library, and his eye is suddenly arrested by the vision of a little satin shoe tripping most daintily along; and this grave embodiment of severe learning is also made a ready captive to Cupid's manœuvres. Again a redoubtable Son of Mars, — full panoplied for the fight, and panting only for victorious fame, — enters the gay saloon, in a foreign clime, where he meets a Spanish brunette of sixteen summers, who captures his brave heart and makes it surrender with a simple twirl of her fan. Who shall give us a mathematical demonstration of the

* "Gentle Life."

mystery? Cupid is indeed a casuist, —

“ He is versed in occult science,
In magic and in clairvoyance.”

The Hibernian was in earnest, if not in haste in his love-suit, for a beauty, when he told her he could get “ no sleep ’o nights for dhraming ov her ! ”

The cunning little sprite, Cupid, accomplishes a good deal of mischief in his quiet way, —

“ He blurs the print of the scholar’s book,
And intrudes on the maiden’s prayer, —
And profanes the cell of the holy man,
In the shape of a lady fair.”

He links hearts together in golden chains, and yet is so capricious, as sometimes to fill those hearts, now with jealous madness, and anon with the ecstasy of bliss.

“ Love beckons in the painter’s dream,
Makes music in the poet’s metre,
O’er youth and age he reigns supreme;
Can any other sway be sweeter ? ”

— And still the songs of all the world,
Shall celebrate Love's endless blisses :
While on a neck a tress is curled,
And while a red lip pouts for kisses.* —

This loving is a great science. Cicero calls it the philosophy of the heart; and a later authority styles it one of the finest of the fine arts. So profound a physiological mystery completely baffles our poor skill at elucidation: and, indeed, it would, were we able, prove superfluous, since experience is its best teacher, and few are so lost to the sensibilities of our nature, as not to have had at least a slight taste of its joys and sorrows. Perchance the fair reader herself — frank were she to confess it — knows something of the ordeal — may have suffered from a slight attack of the fever, — but that is no affair of ours. A humorist writes, — “ In one respect, it is the business of life to conjugate the verb — to love; I loved, thou lovedst, he or she loved; we loved, you loved, they loved; they might, could, would or should be loved.” In the “ battle of life,” courtship

* H. S. Clarke.

is the siege or engagement, the proposal is the assault, and marriage, — the victory. The troubadours carried the science of love-making to great perfection ; they had a curious code of laws for their order ; — for instance : every lover was bound to grow pale at the sight of his mistress, and was compelled to be sparing both in food and sleep. One of the fraternity, having been betrothed to a maiden from her infancy, as she grew up to womanhood, declared his passion, when she promised to bestow a kiss on him whenever he should visit her.

Subsequently she refused to fulfil the promise, however, on the plea that when she made it she did not understand the consequences. The case being referred to arbitration, it was decreed that the lady should be at the mercy of the troubadour, who should take a kiss, and immediately return it. No one will, of course, dispute the equity of the decision. Lovers are singular people, — when they meet, they stand sidling about, as if they came together without any definite object in view ; they exchange sundry sighs and glances, it is true, but scarcely

utter any articulate words. When absent from each other, they think of nothing else but the deliciousness of their interview, and indulge in imaginary conversations, and all sorts of fine things they intended to have said.

—“Your true lovers run into strange capers,” says the bard of Avon, “no sooner met, but they looked; no sooner looked, but they loved; no sooner loved, but they sighed; no sooner sighed, but they asked one another the reason; no sooner knew the reason, but they sought the remedy; and on these degrees have they made a pair of stairs to marriage.” That trysting-time is a happy one; it is then we experience the new delight arising from the consciousness that one heart, at least, beats in unison with our own, — that we have a second self — one in whom we can confide at all times, and in whose love we live. It is the bright, but brief episode of life — its glad hour of romance; and in after time, we turn to the time and place where we first learned to love, with the fondest recollections. Those rosy hours never lose their bloom and beauty to us, but are cherished as a sacred shrine of memory. —

—“Yes, who but can recall the eve they met,
 To breathe, in some green walk, their first young vow!
 While summer flowers with moonlight dews were wet,
 And winds sighed soft around the mountain's brow,
 And all was rapture then, which is but memory now!” —

Poets, like doctors, sometimes differ in their opinions; while one bard insists — “there's nothing like the first love;” another persuasively insinuates that, —

—“First love is a pretty romance,
 Though not quite so lasting as reckoned;
 For when one awakes from its trance,
 There's a great stock of bliss in a second:
 And e'en should the second subside,
 A lover need never despair;
 For the world is uncommonly wide,
 And women — uncommonly fair!
 Your poets their raptures may tell,
 Who never were put to the test, —
 A first love is all very well,
 But, believe me, the last love's the best.” —

Thackeray says — “It is best to love wisely, but to love foolishly is better than not to be able to love at all: some of us can't love, and are proud of our impotence, too.” There !

is always enough of sentimentality, if not sadness, connected with the passion, into which, indeed, both sexes are liable to fall. When Petrarch was separated from the lady of his love, he surrendered himself to hopeless melancholy, shunned society and cherished his grief.

Le Sueur, the celebrated French painter, became deeply enamored of a beautiful nun: he had been engaged to paint the ceiling of a convent chapel, — had seen and loved the fair one, — but, not daring to reveal his passion, he cherished his sorrow, and, it is said, soon sank to a premature grave. Your true lover is not demonstrative; on the contrary, he seeks to conceal from the vulgar gaze all avowal of his passion. So scrupulous, indeed, is he in this, that he often betrays himself by his very anxiety at concealment. Such a suitor is likely to prove true and faithful, while others of greater daring often fail of the test.

In woman, delicacy is her point of honor; it is, alike, her defence and her crowning charm. Gentleness, modesty and true taste, are the triple graces of woman; and these, even with-

out the attractions of external beauty, possess a talismanic power that none can resist. None can deny the fascinating power of beauty; it carries us all captive: now it beams upon us through lustrous, bright eyes, anon, it sits enthroned upon a calm, alabaster brow, or revels in thick clusters of golden hair, in the dimple of a damask cheek, or in the glowing harmony of a symmetrical figure.

Montaigne has said, — “A man is as sensible of the presence of beauty, when he looks upon it, as he is of fire, when he is scorched by it; yet Voltaire has vainly attempted to deny the very existence of any such thing as human beauty! What could he have been doing with his eyes? Old Burton quaintly says, “As amber attracts a straw, so does beauty, admiration;—but,” he also wisely adds, —“that only lasts while the warmth continues, while virtue, wisdom, goodness and real worth, — like the loadstone, never lose their power. These are the true graces, which, as the poet feigns, are linked and tied hand in hand, — because it is by their influence that human hearts are so

firmly united to each other." He is right; these are the graces which, like gravitation in physical nature, invest woman with such marvellous attractive power in the social world. The old Grecian poet seems to have known this secret of her power : —

“To woman, what does nature give?
Beauty, she gives, instead of darts, —
Beauty, instead of shields imparts;
Nor can the fire, nor sword oppose
The fair, victorious where she goes.”

It was the beautiful expression of Jacobi that, “The countenance is made beautiful by the soul’s shining through it;” and this, in part, explains the mystery of a face, devoid of physical beauty, fascinating us by its expression. Ruskin, also, remarks that, “The eye is constantly influenced by what it cannot detect: let the painter define, if he can, the variations of lines on which depend the changes of expression in the human countenance.

“Every woman has a right to be beautiful,”

says a modern writer ;* “ that is the secret of her power, her mission, the key which unlocks her destiny. To be its opposite is an injustice to society, which has a right to expect from her its loveliness, its grace and its attraction. There are many different kinds of beauty, and it is a great mistake to imagine that it consists wholly, or even mainly, of color, form or texture.

There is the beauty of innocence and the beauty of truth, the beauty of childhood and the beauty of the matron, the beauty of wisdom and the beauty of simplicity. The lowest kind of beauty is that merely physical perfection and splendor which receives no aid from voice, look or expression. There is nothing that disenchantments so soon as the discovery of folly, ignorance or bad temper, beneath a fair and seductive form. The possession of any fine and noble quality, on the contrary, illuminates the plainest features and the dullest complexion, much better than costly cosmetics. When women are content to be natural, they will not

* “ Talks on Woman’s Topics.”

fail to be beautiful." But when woman combines moral and mental culture with physical beauty, the music of her voice and the "paradise of her smiles" render her indeed a glory and a power in the earth.

Who has not proved, as Byron beautifully expresses it, —

"How feebly words essay
To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly ray?
Who doth not feel, until his failing sight
Faints into dimness with its own delight, —
His changing cheek, his sinking heart confess —
The might, the majesty of loveliness."

Great beauty is, sometimes, however, a perilous endowment, — even a mockery and snare. Queen Mary of Scotland, according to historians, possessed the utmost beauty of countenance and symmetry of form; yet these very charms proved one of the causes of her ruin. Other illustrations of the mirage of beauty are seen in the story of the celebrated Marie Antoinette of France; of Josephine, the beautiful wife of the Emperor Napoleon, — yet she, so

distinguished for her personal charms, lived to see her regal power dissolve like a vision, and died of a broken heart.

Beauty in woman has a strange history to tell: it is replete with tragic as well as comic catastrophes. Of the latter class, here is an instance: The desire of marrying a beautiful woman, gave rise to the following singular combat. Two gentlemen, one a Spaniard and the other a German, both notable for their birth and the services they had rendered the Emperor Maximilian II., asked the hand of the beautiful Helene Scharsequint, his natural daughter, in marriage. The prince, after much delay, one day, said that he esteemed them both equally, and, feeling much embarrassed, he had resolved that their own prowess and address should decide the matter; but not being willing to risk the loss of either, by permitting them to use offensive weapons, he had ordered a large sack to be brought, and the one who should succeed in putting his rival into it, should obtain his daughter. This whimsical combat between the two gentlemen was performed in the presence of

the imperial court, and continued for nearly an hour. At last the Spaniard was overcome, and the German, Andrew Eberhard, Baron Talbert, having enveloped him in the sack, took him on his back and laid him at the feet of the emperor, when, of course, he gained his beautiful prize.

It is but fair, however, to offer to the ladies some hints about the opposite party; for mistakes are far more frequent and more fatal from that quarter. Impresible young ladies should not scorn advice on so delicate a subject, although they may suspect that its acceptance conveys a tacit reflection upon their discernment and instinct. The beau ideal of a lover, is one, whose well-balanced mind, and symmetrical character, affords a safe guarantee for honor and distinction; one who scorns all dishonesty, and esteems love more than lucre. There are many shades of character, however, and it is but rarely that any individual instance exhibits all the virtues in combination. A facetious writer in *Punch* has given the comic aspects which may amuse the uninitiated :

— “The man who watches the kettle and prevents it boiling over will not fail in his married state, in exercising the same care in always keeping the pot boiling. The man who doesn't take tea, ill-treats the cat, takes snuff, and stands with his back to the fire, is a brute, whom I would not advise you, my dears, to marry upon any consideration, either for love or money, but most decidedly not for love. But the man, who, when the tea is over, is discovered to have had none, is sure to make the best husband; patience like his deserves to be rewarded with the best of wives, and the best of mothers-in-law. My dears, when you meet with such a man of this kind, do your utmost to marry him.” —

When the charms of a fair damsel arrested Alexander in his career of ambition, his tutor, Aristotle, endeavored to arouse anew the spirit of the hero, by ridiculing the weakness of love; and this so far took effect as to cause Alexander to absent himself from his enchantress. She bewailed her fate for some time in solitude, but at length determined to force her way into the presence of the emperor, who confessed that

the philosopher had caused her exile. Upon learning the fact she determined to revenge the insult. She sought his grove, and singing a love-ditty under his window, soon attracted his attention. Philosophy proved no match against the loving arts and wiles of a pretty woman, and poor Aristotle was himself a confessed admirer and captive. The emperor, who, in disguise, was a witness of the scene, exclaimed,—
“ Since love has power to melt the frosts of age, it is not surprising that it should kindle up the fires of youth.”

All women assure us that they abhor compliments; yet none are incapable of receiving, or giving these delicate delusions of flattery. Compliments, indeed, are among the most formidable and potent weapons in the arsenal of Cupid; and when used with the adroitness and skill which characterize the sex, often prove fatal to our liberty and peace. Then as to time,—

“ When should lovers breathe their vows ?
When should ladies hear them ?
When the leaves are on the boughs,
When none else is near them.”

It has been said that an immense amount of false swearing goes on in love affairs ; but false play here, as in chess, is sure to be checkmated ; lovers are apt to forget the difference between passion and prudence. There is, or ought to be, such a thing as ethics in love. “ Recollect that your inquest as to marriage,” says *Blackwood*, “ is a matter of the greatest nicety ; because, either an excess of vigilance, or a deficiency will alike compromise its success. * * * Marrying girls is a nice matter always ; for they are as cautious as crows plundering a cornfield. But the greatest point to be aimed at, perhaps, is to know beforehand what it is you have to deal with ; you are quite sure to know this, fast enough, afterwards. It is not a bad way, when you find yourself fancying a woman, to make her believe you have an aversion to her ; if she has any concealed good qualities, they are pretty sure to come out upon such an occasion.” A man, when in love, may think he is marrying an angel, subsequently he may discover he has merely betrothed a woman. What a doleful account honest Izaak Walton has given us of

Hooker, the illustrious author of "*Ecclesiastical Polity*." He tells us how injudiciously the "judicious Hooker" had hooked himself to a shrew. He solicited his landlady to select for him a wife; and she selected her own daughter, who possessed neither beauty nor fortune. "Affliction," he tells us, "is a divine diet," and perhaps this kind of diet was best for this kind of man. When his friends called to see him, they found him "rocking the cradle"!

There is a story told of a singular couple who began their courtship at an early age; they went on courting when they were out of their teens; the worthy swain ventured to propose a settlement, but was requested to "wait a little longer," and this procrastination continued until at length sundry grey hairs were becoming visible, and half a century had elapsed. Their courtship lasted till death broke the sweet delusion and silenced the sighs of the lovers. We have met with another eccentric case of courtship in the briefest form, which, by way of contrast, is worth repeating. A geologist, once, traveling in a stage-coach in England, happened to sit

opposite to a lady; glances were exchanged, and mutual admiration seemed to be the result. Eye language was soon exchanged for verbal conversation; after a few interchanges about fossils and petrifications, they began to talk about living subjects,—from generalities to specialities,—from the third person plural, to the first person singular. Said the gentleman, “I am still unmarried;” quoth the lady, “So am I;” said the former, “I have sometimes thought of marrying;” the latter responded, “So have I.” Then a pause ensued: “Suppose,” said the gentleman, “we were to marry one another—I would love and cherish:” “I,” said the fair one, “would honor and obey.” In two days they were married. Few will admire such a precipitous courtship; it is altogether too short. There is no epoch in life, as we said, so fresh and felicitous as that commonly designated courtship. In the words of a modern essayist,* — “A man should be excused, nay, honored, if he believes that no one in the world

* “Gentle Life.”

can equal the woman of his choice ; and the woman, on her part, should not doubt that her sweetheart possesses due energy of mind and nobility of character, that he is at least good, and, with the common chance of us all a little in his favor, might be great. So as the sun rises in the morning, chasing away the darkness of night and tinting all the little clouds with a roseate hue, beautiful in its promise, noble in its strength, — fit herald of a pure and a bright day, — even so should the true morning of life rise in each heart, and gild the coming day.”

It is often said, — suitors never take no, for answer. The following story seems to verify the statement : An Irish gentleman made overtures to a rich widow, who, conceiving a violent antipathy towards him, rejected his suit. But with this persistent swain, no — was no answer. To escape his persecutions, the lady was compelled to fly to England ; but her lover soon discovered her at Bath, and became as assiduous as ever. At Cheltenham she was besieged in a like manner, and at length she sought refuge in Brighton. She had been but a few days

settled on the Steyne, when she observed her odious tormentor pass her window. He nodded to her with the familiarity of an old acquaintance.

Resolved upon a desperate remedy, the lady sent her servant to request that he would favor her with an interview. He came; and, as soon as they were alone, she rehearsed the various persecutions she had received from him, and stated, that she had sent for him on that occasion, to put an end to them forever. "Now, sir," said she, taking up a Bible from the table, and kneeling while she raised it to her lips with the greatest solemnity, "by virtue of my oath, I will never marry you"! This she deemed conclusive; but not so her lover; with admirable coolness he knelt beside her, and taking the book from her hand, kissed it also, exclaiming, "By virtue of my oath; madam, I was never certain of you until this moment." The widow's heart was not invincible, it seems, for, as the story goes, she was led captive to the hymeneal altar in less than a calendar month. Cobbett's courtship, as he tells us, was not so summary an affair. When he was a serjeant-major in a

regiment of foot, he fell in love with the daughter of a sergeant of artillery, then in the province of New Brunswick. He had not passed more than an hour in her company when, noting her modesty, her quietude, and her sobriety, he said—"that is the girl for me." The next morning he was up early, and almost before it was light passed the sergeant's house. There she was on the snow, scrubbing out a washing-tub. "That's the girl for me," again cried Cobbett, although she was not more than fourteen, and he nearly twenty-one. "From the day I first spoke to her," he writes, "I had no more thought of her being the wife of another man than I had thought of her becoming a chest of drawers."

He paid every attention to her, and, young as she was, treated her with all confidence. He spoke to her as his friend, his second self. But in six months the artillery were ordered to leave for England and her father with them. Here was indeed a blow. Cobbett knew what Woolwich was, and what temptation a young and pretty girl would be sure to undergo. He therefore took to her his whole fortune, one

hundred and fifty guineas—the savings of his pay and over work, and wrote to tell her if she did not find her place comfortable to take lodgings, and put herself to school, and not to work too hard, for he would be home in two years. It was not, however, till at the end of four years that Cobbett got his discharge. He found his little girl a servant of all work, at five pounds a year, in the house of a Capt. Brisac; and, without saying a word about the matter, she put into his hands the whole of the hundred and fifty guineas unbroken!" What a beautiful episode. What kindly pure trust on both sides.

We have read somewhere of an ingenious stratagem, devised by a French lady of fortune, for securing a true husband. She kept herself very secluded from society, and gave out a report that she was frightfully ugly,—as a counter-influence against her well-known wealth. As she was not accessible personally to her suitors, they, of course, had recourse to their *billets-doux*: and among these, one from Belgium pleased her fancy, and to his missive she replied. An interview was accorded, and the fortunate suitor

proved to be a man of fortune also, and of noble character. When they met in her saloon, the lady wore a mask ; she warned him not to risk his happiness by allying himself with one so deformed in face and feature.

He replied, “ Well, accept my hand, and never unmask but to the eye of your husband :” so charmed was he with her sweet eloquence and grace.

“ I consent,” she replied, “ I shall survive the appearance of affright and disgust — perhaps contempt — you may feel — after marriage.”

“ I will not shrink from the proof,” said he, “ it is your heart, and not your figure, that charms me.”

In a few days their marriage took place ; and notwithstanding his refusal to accept it, the whole of her fortune was settled upon him. Returning from the altar, she threw herself on her knees, before her husband, and placing her hand upon her mask, lifted it, exclaiming — “ you have not deserved deformity, you merit the love of beauty.” And a vision of angelic beauty now stood before him ! Nicholas, the emperor

of Russia, won his bride in a singular way ; yet it had a spice of gallantry in it. During a visit to the King of Prussia, one day, while at dinner, the emperor rolled up a ring in a piece of bread, and, handing it to the Princess Royal, said to her in a subdued voice, — “ If you will accept my hand, put this ring on your finger.” This is the Imperial way of “ popping the question.” She took no time to deliberate, but suffered her heart to speak the truth at once ; and their happy nuptials were soon consummated.

The Royal way is illustrated by the instance of Queen Victoria’s proposal to the man of her choice — and a right worthy one it was—Prince Albert.*

* “ The Prince had been out hunting early with his brother, on that day, but returned at twelve, and half an hour afterwards obeyed the Queen’s summons to her room, where he found her alone. After a few minutes’ conversation on other subjects, the Queen told him why she had sent for him ; and we can well understand any little hesitation and delicacy she may have felt in doing so, for the Queen’s position, making it imperative that any proposal of marriage should come first from her, must necessarily appear a painful one to those who, deriving their ideas on this sub-

Probably it may not be generally known what gave rise to the supposed custom of the ladies having the privilege, on St. Valentine's day, in leap year, of taking the initiative in courtship.

It was derived from the Romans, who, it is said, received it from the Greeks. According to some authorities, Jupiter gave to Venus the authority to reign over the opposite sex once in every four years, and she availed herself of the prerogative at the time of her festival, which took place in the month of February. When Christianity obtained the supremacy over Paganism, and each festival was transformed into a saint's day, the fête day of Venus fell to St. Valentine.

Charles Lamb—one of the kindest and best of “old bachelors”—thus apostrophizes Good St. Valentine: “Great is thy name in the rubric, thou venerable arch-flamen of Hymen! Immortal go-between! who, and what

ject from the practice of private life, are wont to look upon it as the privilege and happiness of a woman to have her hand sought in marriage, instead of having to offer it herself.”—*Memoirs of the Prince Consort*,

manner of person art thou? Art thou but a name typifying the restless principle which impels poor humans to seek perfection in union; or wert thou, indeed, a mortal prelate, with thy tippet and thy rochet, thy apron on, and decent lawn sleeves? Mysterious personage! like unto thee, assuredly, there is no other mitred father in the calendar. Thou comest attended with thousands and ten thousands of little loves, and the air is

‘Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings:’

Singing cupids are thy choristers, and thy precentors; and instead of the crosier, the mystic arrow is borne before thee.” This tutelary genius, now so venerable, is supposed to make his annual saintly visitation among the sons and daughters of men, on the fourteenth day of February; and, even to our own times, such is the honor paid to his memory, that nearly a million of love-missives are said to pass through the London Post Office, and a similar proportion through our own. It is scarcely credible to

what an extent this ephemeral courtship is carried on by these means — one might, indeed, suppose we were a very loving people, and that marriage was the inevitable destiny of the race ; did we not know that these billets-doux were for the most part, mere burlesque. Visions of Love, of Cupids, of Hymens, and the allegory of the “ bestuck and bleeding heart,” — those delightful eternal commonplaces, which “ having been, will always be,” — no school-boy nor school-man can write away ; because they have their irreversible throne in the fancy and affections.

Willis, in his “ Pencilings,” relates a singular instance of two silent lovers, who seemed to have sighed away all their time, till death separated them. A certain clergyman was accustomed to officiate every Sabbath morning in a village church, near London. Among his auditors, he observed a young lady, who always occupied a certain seat, and whose close attention began insensibly to grow to him an object of thought and pleasure. She left the church as soon as service was finished, and it so chanced, that he went on for a year without knowing her name,

but his sermon was never written without many a thought how she would approve of it, nor preached with satisfaction unless he read approbation in her face. Gradually he came to think of her at other times than when writing sermons, and to wish to see her on other days than Sundays; but the weeks slipped on, and though he fancied that she grew paler and thinner, he never had the courage to speak to her or to ask her name. By those silent steps, however, love had worked into his heart, and he made up his mind at length to seek her acquaintance, and if possible, to marry her; when one day he was sent for to minister at a funeral. The face of the corpse was the same that had looked up at him, Sunday after Sunday, till he had learned to make it part of his religion and his life.

He was unable to perform the service, and another clergyman present officiated. After she was buried, her father took him aside, and, expressing his regret at causing him pain, said that he could not resist the impulse to tell him that his daughter had mentioned his name with her last breath, and that he was afraid that concealed

affection for him had hurried her to the grave. " Since that time," said the clergyman in question, " my heart has been dead within me, and I look forward only — I shall speak to her in Heaven ! ”

Love has its scroll of honor — its army of martyrs. History is full of such incidents, of severe ordeals endured by those who loved in real earnest, and who counted nothing but truth and honor too great a sacrifice to lay upon the altar of affection. There was a shepherd of Mesopotamia, who had looked with loving glance upon a bright-eyed daughter ; and for her sake toiled seven long years. But when his weary bondage ended — a slavery that seemed to him but of few days, for the love he had to her, — he found that the loved one of his heart had been supplanted by an elder sister, and that, to obtain the woman of his choice, he had to serve seven years more ; — he counted not the cost, but toiled bravely on, and — Rachel was his own. We have not to work so hard now-a-days to win a wife ; and it is possible that that is the reason we seem to prize a good wife so much

less than the patriarch. In the days when England and Scotland were distracted by warfare, and the fear and dread of Douglas were on every foeman's heart, there was a young lady in England, very beautiful and very rich. Her hand was sought by many suitors, and once, at a great festival, she declared that she would marry no one unless he showed his bravery in defending Castle Dangerous, the Douglas Castle then in possession of the English, against Douglas himself, for a year and a day. At length, Sir John Wilton, for the love he bore to the lady, undertook the charge. He was sent to the place, and for a long time remained in security, but was at last induced to come to open conflict with the Scottish forces and perished. They found a love-note from the lady under the breast-plate of the knight.

“Of all the heaven-bestowed privileges of the poet,” writes Mrs. Jameson, the highest, the dearest, the most enviable, is the power of immortalizing the object of his love, — of dividing with her his amaranthine wreath of glory, and repaying the inspiration caught from her eyes,

with a crown of everlasting fame. It is not enough that in his imagination he has deified her — that he has burned his heart in incense upon the altar of her perfections; the divinity, thus decked out in richest and loveliest hues, he places on high, and calls upon all ages and all nations to bow down before her.”

Frederick of Prussia, in the hope of securing an army of giants, one day meeting with a remarkably tall young woman, alighted from his horse, and desired her to deliver a letter to the officer of his crack regiment. The missive was to the effect that the bearer was to be immediately married to the tallest grenadier in the service. The young lady being somewhat terrified, was induced to transfer the commission to a diminutive old woman whom she met on the road, and thus escaped the arbitrary destiny.

A young Scotchman having been smitten by a pair of bright eyes and blooming cheeks, persuaded the owner thereof — the lady of his love, to accompany him to the nuptial altar. When the ceremonial had proceeded to the clause,

imposing the duty of the wife's subjection to her husband — the half-married swain interposed, — “say no more about that, sir; if this hand remains upon this body, I'll make her obey me.” “Are we married yet?” eagerly ejaculated the exasperated maiden, and on being assured to the contrary, she continued, “Ah, very well, we will finish the remainder another time;” in another moment, the lady-bird had escaped.

A wealthy New York merchant had an only daughter, possessed of the highest attractions, moral, personal and pecuniary. She became devotedly attached to a young man of her own rank of life, and in every respect worthy of her choice. All preliminaries were arranged; and the marriage, after two or three postponements, was fixed to take place on a certain day. A few evenings preceding, the parties met in a gay company, when a “tiff” arose between the affianced in consequence of some overt attentions paid to another pair of sparkling eyes and inimitable ringlets. The gentleman retorted, and spoke slightly of a certain cousin, whose

vest was the admiration of the assembly, and which, it was hinted darkly, had been embroidered by the fair hand of the heiress in question. On the following morning the swain thought, with some remorse, on the angry feeling he had exhibited; and, as a part of the *amende honorable*, packed up with great care a magnificent satin dress, which he had previously bespoke for his beloved, and which had been sent home to him in the interval, and transmitted it to the lady, with a note to the following effect:—

“Dearest Jane: I have been unable to close my eyes all night, in consequence of thinking of our misunderstanding last evening. Pray pardon me, and, in token of your forgiveness, deign to accept the accompanying dress, and wear it for the sake of your affectionate Henry.”

The servant was despatched with the present; but, as fate would have it, he was also commissioned to take another parcel to the tailor's, — a pair of “continuations.” The valet blundered, and the destination of the parcels was reversed; the consequence was, the insulted dignity of the

fair one could not be appeased, and -- the match was broken off!

Match-making, in all its phases, is the great business of courtship; it is said to be its *primum mobile*. The chaperon is a kind of masked battery from behind which, beauty discharges her shafts. The agent in this case is usually an accomplished widow, well skilled in all affairs of the heart, — and the best modes of its attack and capture.

Widows, indeed, are rarely reluctant to accept a second engagement; nor are they often unsuccessful in their essay. It is urged, with much seeming plausibility, that some hearts become the better for keeping in reserve — they become all the mellower — and, therefore, the more worthy of acceptance. Flirtation, coquetry and gallantry are opposed to genuine love-making; they are a spurious imitation, or affectation of the tender passion; — they are base coin in the currency of Cupid. Coquetry is not confined to one sex merely, there are male flirts as well as female, and the former are by far the more reprehensible. These triflers with the heart's

affections make sport and spoil of the best and holiest attributes of our nature; and their evil-doings are to be deprecated by all honorable minds. "A coquette," says Punch, "is a graduate in the science of flirtation, who has taken every degree from her *alma mater* — who is so good a mistress of arts that she no longer needs a tutor, and is competent to manage her own affairs without the aid of a chaperon. She is a psychological curiosity — undergoing two changes before arriving at maturity; — from the insect of the school period she becomes the chrysalis of the ballroom, whence she emerges from beneath the wing of her chaperon to flutter forth the full-grown butterfly, or coquette. She has a scale of attractions by which she measures her deportment towards different individuals. She can, at a moment's notice, be intensely agreeable, or quietly repellent. She can smile with one side of her face upon a new conquest, and frown with the other upon his warring rival. She knows instinctively the exact moment when to commence a flirtation; and, having no passion, no feelings — can

adroitly break off an ineligible one, even if the wedding liveries have been ordered. Flattery is her food, and caprice her rule of conduct. She may win our astonishment by her boldness, ingenuity and Protean changes of demeanor, — but not admiration or esteem.”

She has a bewildering way of fascinating her admirers; is an adroit mistress of finesse, the oratory of the eye, and the pantomime of sighs and glances; but she is a stranger to all the gentle emotions and sentiments of the heart. The great aim of a coquette is to please and tease; she is studious to excite the feeling of love, without meaning to gratify it. The life of a heartless coquette is a constant succession of stratagems: —

“ Whom now her smiles revived, her scorn destroys, —
She will, and she will not, — she grants, denies,
Consents, retracts; advances, and then flies:
Approving and rejecting in a breath,
Now proffering mercy, now presenting death!”

She may be compared to tinder, which is intended to catch sparks, but does not always

succeed in lighting up a match. Men are perverse creatures; they fly that which pursues them, and pursue that which flies them; — forwardness on the part of a female, makes them draw back, and backwardness draws them forward. There will be always this difference between a coquette and a woman of sense and modesty, that while the one courts every man, every man will court the other.

A novel and summary case of courtship recently occurred in England, by means of the photographic art. A sergeant of a regiment, in course of conversation one day with one of his company, was shown the *carte de visite* of his sister; he “fell in love” with the fair face, and soon after had his own portrait taken and transmitted to the lady, who was also no less favorably impressed with the effigy. A meeting of the parties, for the first time, subsequently took place, which soon resulted in their union.

Cases of clandestine courtship, being transactions *sub rosa*, and consequently unchronicled, we must pass over; no doubt, could the facts

be told, no little romance would be found in them. Run-away matches — or elopements of a countess with her coachman, or a roué with an heiress, — formerly found an asylum at Gretna Green, where a stalwart son of Vulcan was ever ready to forge for them the hymeneal chains.

Most readers are familiar with the story of Lady Hamilton's flirtation with Lord Nelson, and her unhappy fate. She had risen from the humble position of a chambermaid to that of being the idol of England's greatest seaman, and others; at last, as a retribution for her wickedness, died in misery and want.

It was simply by flirtation that she enticed Nelson into sin — from a wife whom he loved, and with whom, as he said, he could find no fault. Yes, simply by flirtation, — a practice as dangerous as it is frequent; and yet how often we hear it said, "what harm can there be in a little innocent flirtation?" But the phrase is incorrect, — for few, indeed, are the flirtations that can be called *innocent*. How many have, through this "innocent pastime,"

made fearful shipwreck of happiness and life! But, as we have already intimated, there are male flirts as well as female. Let young ladies, therefore, not only refrain from enacting the one, but be especially watchful against the insidious artifices of the other.

“There would be no marriages, however, unless ladies in some measure took the initiative; and marriage is, and always will be of so intense an interest, — of so gigantic an importance to woman, and to the world in general, that we can forgive anything within the bounds of delicacy and fairness, which a young lady may do in order to get the articles of a partnership for life fairly drawn up. Flirtation is a species of lying, and one can lie with the eye or the hand, as well as with the tongue. There are other songs without words besides those of Mendelsshon. Those songs are the songs of Syrens; they are flatterers, which lead those who listen to them, to sad destruction.” *

* “Gentle Life.”

" So a girl,
 Full of fine airs and gracious coquetry,
 Enslaves a hundred, and cares not for one ;
 May turn the course of this one's life, —
 Weak heart — poor fool — who dares not blunder out
 His deep-felt love, but hugs his misery,
 And dies a disappointed bachelor, —
 A victim of bright glances, and sweet ways."

Charles Swain's method with coquettes is
 worthy of note by all victims : —

" Whatsoe'er she vowed to-day,
 Ere a week had fled away
 She'd refuse me !
 And shall I her steps pursue —
 Follow still and fondly woo ?
 No ! Excuse me !

" If she love me — it were kind
 Just to teach her her own mind ;
 Let her lose me !
 For no more I'll seek her side —
 Court her favor — feed her pride —
 No ! Excuse me !

" Let her frown — frowns never kill ;
 Let her shun me, if she will —
 Hate, abuse me ; —

Shall I bend 'neath her annoy?
Bend, and make my heart her toy?
No — Excuse me !”

If coquetting is to be deprecated in the gentler sex, what shall we say of it in the sterner? And yet this heart-treason is much more prevalent among the latter, who seem to think they have a prerogative to trifle with woman's love with absolute impunity.

On the other hand, the woman who, having raised hopes in the bosom of a lover, disappoints him, without sufficient reason, is a jilt! A woman cannot love sincerely who is capable of wantonly wounding the feelings of her lover. Love, also, has many an alias — sometimes it is pride, selfishness, or even desire for wealth and station.

Carew, the poet, has in his exquisite verse, thus sketched the coquette : —

“ Tell me not of your starry eyes,
Your lips that seem on roses fed,
Your breasts, where Cupid trembling lies,
Nor sleeps for kissing of his bed; —

**A bloomy face of vermil cheeks,
 Like Hebe's in her ruddiest hours,
 A breath that softer music speaks,
 Than summer winds a-woeing flowers :**
These are but gauds, — nay, what are lips ?
**Coral beneath the ocean-stream,
 Whose brink, when your adventurer slips,
 Full oft he perisheth on them.**
**Give me, instead of beauty's bust,
 A tender heart, a loyal mind,
 Which with temptation I would trust,
 Yet never linked with error find.**
**One in whose gentle bosom, I
 Could pour my secret heart of woes,
 Like the care-burdened honey-fly,
 That hides its murmurs in the rose."**

One of the most notorious of coquettes upon record was Anne Bracegirdle, an English actress of the seventeenth century, who possessed such singular power of fascinating the hearts and senses of men, that it is said the sight of her bright black eyes and rich brown cheek procured her as many admirers as she had male spectators ; yet no lover, however rich or bold could capture her heart.

We find that jilting, was, in early times

visited by summary chastisement. There is a record in the Diary of the Rev. J. Lewis, Rector of Chalfield, England, dated Aug., 1719, stating that "Sir Christopher Hales, being jilted by a lady who promised him marriage, and put him off on the day set for their marriage, gave her a good whipping at parting! The times are somewhat different now. Ladies are accustomed to look at the looking-glass in the light of an art-treasure; for although sometimes it may reveal unwelcome secrets, that should be kept in the dark, they know its fidelity to the merits of a new bonnet or basque, or the graceful flow of a stately robe. Yes, woman practiced the art by intuition, long before Shakspeare's time — "of holding the mirror up to nature:" Milton supposes our primal mother caught glimpses of her beauty in the placid waters of Paradise. Certainly her fair daughters have adhered to some such faithful reflector ever since, — that is the mirror. Some wag has given a facetious definition of it, thus: — It is the only truth-teller in general favor — a journal in which Time records his travels, — a smooth acquaintance,

but no flatterer — and a friend who casts no unjust reflections. Southey tells us that when he was in Lisbon, a nun made her escape from a nunnery ; and the first thing she asked for, on reaching home, was, — a looking-glass ! But, he adds, she had entered into the convent when only five years old, and from that time had never seen her own face. There was, certainly, some excuse for her curiosity. Queen Elizabeth held to her looking-glass as long as she could, but she had to discard it at last for its plain speaking, and reflection upon her appearance.

We are told that when far advanced in life, she ordered all pictures of herself painted by artists who had not flattered her, to be collected and burned, and further forbade all persons, “ save special cunning painters, ” to draw her likeness. But let us draw a veil over her ladyship’s vanity — she was but human. “ Beauty, ” said Socrates, “ is a short-lived tyranny ” : and yet most of us agree with Aristotle that it is better than all the letters of recommendation in the world. The conduct of men has proved however, that love — the true thing — is not mere fealty to a face :

if an ugly woman of wit and worth cannot be loved until she is known, a beautiful fool will cease to please as soon as she is found out.

Beautiful women may dazzle and bewilder us with their wiles and fascinations in the gay saloon, but who does not feel a deeper and holier regard for those, even if less endowed with physical charms, who become the impersonation of grace and virtue in the charmed circle of domestic life? Love is a hallowed passion, — it is angel-like in its beneficence, — a gleam of the celestial, gladdening and beautifying our earthly life. Wordsworth has idealized such in these graceful lines : —

“ She was a queen of noble nature’s crowning, —
A smile of hers was like an act of grace ;
She had no winsome looks, no pretty frowning,
Like gaudy beauties of the vulgar race :
But if she smiled, a light was on her face, —
A clear, cool kindliness, a lunar beam
Of peaceful radiance, silvering in the stream
Of human thought of unabiding glory, —
Not quite awaking truth — not quite a dream, —
A visitation bright and transitory.”

According to Dr. Clarke, the Mohammedans sometimes treat any cruelty on the part of ladies towards their lovers, as a penal offence. The unhappy termination of a love-affair of this kind, which once occasioned a trial, — was caused by a young man falling desperately in love with a girl, and who eagerly sought to marry her ; but his proposals were rejected. In consequence of this, he killed himself by poison. Whereupon the Turkish police arrested the father of the obdurate fair, and tried him for culpable homicide !

“ If the accused,” argued they with amusing gravity, “ had not had a daughter, the deceased would not have fallen in love ; consequently he would not have been disappointed ; consequently he would not have swallowed poison ; consequently he would not have died ; — but the accused had a daughter, the deceased had fallen in love,” etc. Upon all these counts he was called upon to pay the price of the young man’s life ; and this, being fixed at the sum of eighty piastres, was accordingly exacted.

“ In the connubial lottery, ugly women possess

an advantage to which sufficient importance has not been attached. It is a common observation that husband and wife resemble one another; and many ingenious theorists, attempting to solve the problem by attributing it to sympathy, contemplation of one another's features, congeniality of habits and modes of life, etc., have fallen into the very common error of substituting the cause for the effect. This mutual likeness is the occasion, not the result, of marriage.

Every man, like Narcissus, becomes enamored of the reflection of himself, only choosing a substance instead of a shadow. His love for any particular woman is self-love at second-hand, — vanity reflected, — compound egotism. When he sees himself in the mirror of a female face, he exclaims, — “How intelligent, how amiable, how interesting! — how admirably adapted for a wife!” and he forthwith makes his proposals to the personage so expressly and literally calculated to keep him in countenance. The uglier he is, the more need he has of this consolation: he forms a romantic attachment to the “fascinating creature,” without once sus-

pecting that he is paying his addresses to himself, and playing the innamorata before a looking-glass. Take self-love from love, and very little remains: it is taking the flame from Hymen's torch and leaving the smoke."*

Among instances of eccentric courtship, may be mentioned that of Day, the author of "Sandford and Merton," who made certain matrimonial experiments which led to some grotesque results. In early life, being "well to do in the world," he started on a wife-hunting expedition through Wales, Ireland, and England; and in the county of Wiltshire he became acquainted with a fair one whose beauty enslaved him, but it was a case of unrequited love. Another refusal came to him in Ireland, the new scorner being the sister of Lovell Edgeworth. In his despair he selected two girls from Foundling hospitals, on conditions that he should educate them, and provide for their maintenance; and if either should ultimately please his fancy, he would marry her. He took them to France, and

* Horace Smith.

wasted much zeal in training them according to his whim. One, proving quite unmanageable, was soon disposed of; the other was kept for a longer time, and handled in a rougher way. —“But his experiments failed. He dropped melted sealing-wax on her arms, and she could not endure it without flinching. When he fired pistols at her garments, loaded with powder, but which she believed were loaded with ball, she started and screamed. He tried her fidelity by communicating pretended secrets, but she told them to the servants.” Therefore she likewise was dismissed. Cœlebs, however, was not disheartened. Meeting two ladies named Honora and Elizabeth Sneyd, who afterwards were successively the wives of his friend Edgeworth, he fell in love with, and proposed to them in turn. Honora at once refused him, but Elizabeth replied that she would have loved him had he only been a gentleman. Thereupon he went to Paris, and writhed for a year under a drilling and dancing-master, “pent up in durance vile for hours together, with his feet in the stocks, a book in his hand, and contempt in his heart.

But it was all in vain. On presenting himself before his cruel mistress, she is said to have dismissed him with the unladylike remark, ‘I confess, the Thomas Day, blackguard, is more pleasing to me than Thomas Day, gentleman.’”

Day was grievously disappointed. Wandering over England and the continent, associating with Rousseau and writing political tracts and squibs, he resigned himself to bachelor life. The right lady, however, was not far off. “Of prepossessing features, and of modest, retiring habits,” a Miss Esther Milnes, of Wakefield, fell in love with him, and, after two years of uncertainty, he consented to marry her on condition that she should renounce all the vanities and fashions of ordinary life, and should place beyond his control the large fortune of which she was owner. They were married in 1778, and eleven years passed as pleasantly as the husband’s peculiar views in life permitted. —

Some of our readers may possibly be familiar with the legend related of Eginhard, secretary of Charlemagne, and the emperor’s daughter, with whom he was desperately in love.

One winter's night his clandestine visit was prolonged to a late hour, and in the meantime there had been a deep fall of snow. What to do to escape detection he did not know; to remain longer would expose him to danger, and to go would be as bad, as his footsteps would be betrayed in the snow. In this dilemma — as in most others, Love found out a way, — the princess proposed to carry him on her back to a neighboring house; which she did. It happened, however, that the emperor, from the window of his chamber, was a spectator of the interesting proceeding: and on the following day, before the assembly of his nobles, when Eginhard and his lady-love were present, he asked, what ought to be done to a man who should compel a king's daughter to carry him on her shoulders, through frost and snow, on a winter's night? They all answered that he was worthy of death. The lovers became alarmed, but the emperor said, addressing Eginhard, — “ Hadst thou loved my daughter, thou shouldst have come to me, — thou art worthy of death, — but I give thee two lives, — take thy

fair partner in marriage, fear God and love one another.”

History furnishes us with numerous instances in which the love of woman has been the occasion of the rise and overthrow of states and kindgoms. To refer to a few of these will suffice for our purpose. After the celebrated battle of Arbelles, which decided the fate of Darius and his vast empire, it will be remembered, that Alexander marched towards Persepolis, the capital of Persia, the gates of which he found open : and on a certain evening, “ abandoning himself to the fascinations of the lovely Thais,” he yielded to her demands, when she solicited the ruin of Persepolis, in order that it might be said that a woman had more contributed to avenge Greece, for the conflagration of Athens, than the greatest captains had been able to do. We need scarcely refer to the fierce feud between Achilles and Agamemnon at the siege of Troy ; both heroes having been victims of woman’s wiles.

“ O, Love! what art thou, Love? The ace of hearts,
Tramping earth’s kings and queens, and all its suits,

A player, masquerading many parts,
 In life's old carnival; — a boy that shoots,
 From ladies' eyes, such mortal woundy darts;
 A gardener, pulling hearts' ease up by the roots;
 The Puck of passion — partly false — partly real —
 A marriageable maiden's 'beau ideal.' ”

Love has no less absolute sway over men of genius and literature; the poets, with old Horace at their head, are eminently among his devotees. According to Shakspeare's experience, —

“ Never durst poet touch a pen to write,
 Until his ink were tempered with love's sighs.”

Spenser, Byron, Burns, Moore, with most of our English poets, as well as the most noted of Continental Europe, — Beranger, Ariosto, Petrarch, Tasso and Dante — all evinced their susceptibility to the tender passion and delighted to sing its praises.

Poor Shenstone, although in the ranks of the unmarried, yet was no celibate at heart, — the real occasion of his unhappiness was, that early in life he had been captivated by a young lady,

adapted to be “both the muse and the wife of the poet”; but the latter she never became. His plaintive love-ditties flowed from no fictitious source. “It is long since,” he says, “I have considered myself as *undone!*”

A similar instance was that of Thompson, who met a reciprocal passion in his Amanda, while the full tenderness of his heart “was ever wasting itself like waters in a desert.” In one of his letters, he wrote, “I know not what it is, but she dwells upon my thought in a mingled sentiment, which is the sweetest, the most intimately pleasing the soul can receive, and which I would wish never to want towards some dear object or another.”

Collins, who suffered so sadly from neglect and poverty, but who yet sang so sweetly of the “Passions,” knew something about “being in love.” He was captivated by a fair damsel, who was born a day before himself, but she refused to respond to his appeals.

“Your case is a hard one,” said a friend to him. “It is so, indeed,” replied the poet, “for I came into the world a day after the fair.”

“ It would be a curious surprise to us, could we see, laid out before us as on a chart, the intermingling lines of life, — of dearest friends, of deadliest foes, of lovers, of future wives and husbands. Up to a certain point their destinies have appeared to the superficial looker-on, to themselves, even, as widely separate: yet in many an instance, could we but obtain the secret clue to the two lives, they have, unconsciously to each other, wandered on side by side, or crossed and recrossed each other in their separate orbits with a marvellous pertinacity.” *

There is no heart so dull to all good influence, that is not touched by the exhibition of a woman's unselfish, undying love, which is ever ready to requite evil with good, and to forget the wrong that has been done, in her desire to win back the affection that has strayed. She calmly waits her opportunity, “ hoping against hope,” and praying that it may come; and with a wondrous patience and winning grace, welcomes the first indications of a return,

* Howitt.

and goes forth, clad in robes of purity, forgiveness and love, to meet the wanderer, and aid or hasten his faltering steps. There is no sight more beautiful than that of a woman's inexhaustible tenderness, continually prompting her to give that ready sympathy which

“ Angel hearts bestow,
Who look for no return.” *

The ways of womankind are manifold, and if some of their peculiarities are less pleasing than others, or are fraught with danger to our peace and happiness, it cannot be denied that in nine cases out of ten, they are our light and solace. Almost all we know of virtue and religion, we have learned from woman. Our greatest happiness has come from her. “ Without her the two extremities of this life would be destitute of succor, and the middle be devoid of pleasure.” As the Rev. H. W. Beecher pictorially expresses it, “ Where there is love in the heart, there are rainbows in the eyes, covering every dark cloud with gorgeous hues.”

* “London Society.”

“ For never can the faintest spark
That flashes from love’s altar-fires
Vanish and die into the dark,
But, ere the flickering life expires,
It brings a blessing to some heart
’Mid earthly troubles toiling sore ;
For love, we know, is but a part
Of God, enduring evermore.”

“ Love is an actual need, — an urgent requirement of the heart. It is pure, celestial manna, the bright and ever-gushing fountain of waters, even the ambrosia and nectar of Elysium itself. Without it life is unfinished, hope is without aim, and man miserable : nor does he come to comprehend the end and glory of existence, until he has experienced the fulness and beauty of an entire and soul-satisfying love, which actualizes all indefinite cravings and expectations, and imparts a foretaste of the rich and precious fruits of his future destiny.”

There is a characteristic story told of Dean Swift, who, one day, when walking in Phoenix street, Dublin, being overtaken by a thunder-storm, took shelter under a tree, where a party was also sheltering, consisting of two young

ladies and two young gentlemen. The Dean, noticing one of the young ladies weeping, enquired the cause, when he was informed that they were a bridal party, on their way to church, but that the rain had spoiled their dresses and they could not now go. "Never mind, I'll marry you," said the Dean, and taking out his prayer-book, he then and there married them, their witnesses being present; and to make the thing complete, he tore a leaf from his pocket-book, and with his pencil wrote and signed a certificate, which he handed to the bride, — it was as follows :

**" Under a tree, in stormy weather,
I married this man and woman together :
Let none but Him, who rules the thunder,
Sever this man and woman asunder.**

J. SWIFT."



III.
WEDDED LIFE.

(100)



WEDDED LIFE.



HOME! how significant a word, how suggestive of quiet enjoyment and the kindling glow of sunny faces and happy hearts! Home is not simply a place to live in, it is a sacred enclosure—the hallowed retreat of the virtues and the affections; it belongs to innocence and Eden,—our “Paradise regained,” with its beautiful buds and blossoms and rich fruitage, beautifying and blessing our common humanity. If there be a spot over which angels may be supposed most fondly to linger, and scatter from their radiant wings celestial incense, it must

surely be over the loved precincts of a consecrated home.

Like the Sabbath, it has survived the Fall, and still retains somewhat of Eden-blessedness : while its crowning glory is the sacred sanction with which Christianity has invested it, as a prefiguration and earnest of holier things unseen ! Even the ancients, — who knew nothing of home in our rich, modern sense, — regarded with love and worship the “ *Veneranda domus,*” while their poets, lingering over its endearing attractions, made it the centre of unspeakable enjoyments. Even that stern old bachelor, Horace, sung of “ *Domus et placens uxor,*” —

“ Thy home, and in the cup of life,
That honey-drop — a pleasing wife ! ”

As the bliss of Paradise, without the presence of Eve was incomplete, so is our Eden-home without the sweet smile of woman. Blessings, then, on the “ honey-drop ” — which sweetens the bitterest draught of the chalice of life, and makes the sweet one, sweeter still. Who can appreciate the beneficent immunities of home.

better than the homeless? Who has tuned the lyre so touchingly to the praise of its tranquil pleasures, as the hapless "exile from home," who, himself a wretched wanderer over the world, was denied all participation of home-joys, while thousands were singing exultingly his own plaintive words, —

"Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home!"

Home is the domain of the social affections, for love is sanctified by marriage; it is also the palladium of those graces and amenities which adorn and beautify our earthly existence, and is the prophecy of a purer one hereafter. That only is a true Home where Love reigns supreme, and all are happy subjects of his peaceful sceptre: wherever found, it is, indeed, a spot

"Supremely blest;
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest;
Where man, creation's tyrant, casts aside
His sword and sceptre, pageantry and pride.
While in his softened looks benignly blend
The sire, the son, the husband, brother, friend;

8

Here woman reigns ; the mother, daughter, wife,
 Strew with fresh flowers the narrow way of life ;
 In the clear heaven of her delighted eye,
 An angel-guard of loves and graces lie ;
 Around her knees ' domestic duties meet,'
 And fireside pleasures gambol at her feet."*

It has been beautifully said that, to Adam Paradise was Home ; so, to the wise and good among his descendants, Home is Paradise. Or as Young expressed it, —

"The first sure symptom of a mind in health,
 Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at Home."

Marriage is a part of the law of nations, in savage as well as civilized states. The Lacedæmonians were remarkable for their severity towards those who deferred marriage beyond a certain age, as well as those who repudiated it altogether. The Athenians had an express law requiring all public officers to be married.

Fines were first imposed upon unmarried men about the year of Rome 350 ; and when pecuniary forfeitures failed to insure their obedience to

* Montgomery.

these connubial edicts, their contumacious neglect of the fair sex was punished by degradation from their tribe. Constantine abolished the penalties imposed on celibacy. Among the sable sons of Africa, and the Red men of our land, the wife is purchased by the husband from the father. Pope Innocent III. is said to have first ordained the ecclesiastical celebration of marriage, prior to which time it was a civil contract.

It is evident from the teaching of the Divine Oracles that, of all human relations, that of marriage should take precedence, — that we should live, not in communities merely, but in distinct families. And after all that has been urged in behalf of communism or socialism, the evils which the detestable system must inevitably entail, are far more controlling and ruinous to the well-being of society, than those inconveniences and evils which are engendered by our modern civilization, in the marriage relation.

One of these evils is the too-prevailing custom of living at hotels or boarding-houses, for the sake of avoiding the cares of a household, by which a virtual sacrifice is made of those endear-

ments and conservative influences, which grow out of the beneficent and hallowed associations of home.

Comparatively little is really known of the delights of true home-life in our great cities, — its privacy and peace, its rich resources of quiet enjoyment and repose, — because many see so little of it. Life at an hotel or boarding-house is a very different thing; there the sense of all that constitutes domestic happiness is unknown; it is rather a place in which to eat and sleep, than a sweet retreat from worldly trials and toils, — a sanctuary of the affections, amenities and immunities of life.

“ What profound powers of affection, grief, pity, sympathy, delight, religion and love, belong, by its constitution, to every human soul! And if the sources of life have not greatly thwarted the divine dispensations of nature, will they not all rise into genial play within bosoms consecrated to each other’s happiness, till comes between them the cold hand of death? It would seem that everything fair and good must flourish under that holy necessity

— everything foul and bad fade away ; and that no quarrel or unkindness would ever be between pilgrims travelling together through Time to Eternity, whether their path lead through an Eden or a waste.

“ Habit itself comes with humble hearts to be gracious and benign ; they who have once loved, will not, for that very reason, cease to love ; memory shall brighten when hope decays ; and if the present be not now so blissful, so thrilling, so steeped in rapture, as it was in the golden prime, yet shall it without repining suffice to them whose thoughts borrow unconsciously sweet comforts from the past and future, and have been taught by mutual cares and sorrows to indulge tempered expectations of the best earthly felicity.

“ And is it not so ? What tranquillity and contentment bless some human homes : calm on-flowings of life shaded in domestic privacy, and seen but at times coming out into the open light ! What brave patience under poverty, — what beautiful resignation in grief ! ” *

* Blackwood.

"Is there a place that can impart
 Blest visions to the aching heart?
 Is there a place whose image dear
 Can soothe our griefs, dispel our fear?
 That place is Home.
 Of hardships we may bear our part,
 Still Home's the touchstone of the heart;
 Whatever may our bosoms cheer
 Whatever we regard as dear
 Is found in Home."

Some of the nuptial usages and phrases of modern times are of Roman origin. The bridal veil originated with the Romans, hence the ceremony was called *nuptiæ*, from *nubo* to veil. The placing of the ring on the fourth finger of the bride's left hand also originated with them; they having an erroneous idea that there was a small artery which ran from that finger to the heart; and the wearing of the ring upon it was designed as an emblem of hearts united.

We are all familiar with the beautiful pastoral about Ruth, in the Bible, and other instances of marriage in sacred history. Even among Pagan nations, marriage is regarded as honor-

able; — by the Hindoos, indeed, it is esteemed as a signal virtue and a religious duty; while, with the Romans and Greeks, celibacy is deemed a crime, punishable by law.

The marriage ceremonies of the Armenians, like those of the Turks, require that the lover should not see his spouse elect until the day of the nuptials. After the ceremonies are completed the bridegroom is allowed to lift the veil, and, for the first time, to look upon the lady of his love. Matrimony in his case, as to the question of beauty, is, indeed, a lottery.

The Poles, in their marriage contracts, do not enquire what a girl's portion is, but how many relations she has; it being the custom of their country for all the relations to present to the bride a wedding gift.

After all the national peculiarities and ceremonies incident to the estate matrimonial, — the strange formality of the Hindoo, the commercial spirit of the African, the romance and poetry of Spaniard and Swiss, or the modest courtesy of the Dutch, — none can for a moment be compared for beauty, simplicity

and propriety, with our own marriage ceremonial.

It sometimes, however, presents its comic phases — the parties concerned assume a solemn, if not a lugubrious aspect, — bride and bridegroom, mothers and sisters ; — while the little sunshine that does gild up the scene, comes from the gay faces of the bridemaids, and their gallant attendants. The most composed and comfortable-looking of all the group are the clergyman and clerk. Then comes the no less amusing ceremony of salutation, when everybody surrounds the happy pair, with far-fetched compliments and felicitations, — often conveyed in such a manner, as almost to imply a prophecy of their future misery.

Marriage is too sacred a matter to be trifled with, but after the contract is made, all that pertains to its celebration should be joyous and festive — like the music of marriage bells.

“Hear the mellow wedding bells, golden bells !
What a world of happiness, their harmony foretells !
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight !

From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune.
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!

The floral emblem of marriage is said to be the wild box-vine, which has the property of clinging and entwining, like the affections of the heart. "It is humble—creeping, indeed, upon the ground,—but it remains fresh and green, although the snows fall and the winds be blighting and cold. It bears two fragrant flowers—modest and sweet—not only upon one stem, but upon one cup or calix, where they bloom together in retired and sheltered places, and unite at last to form a double red berry, shaped like two hearts closely knit together.

Nuptial love, which makes of the twain, one flesh, is a spark of the true Promethean fire, with which heaven, in its kindness to the sons of men, animates the human breast, and inspires it with somewhat of an antepast of its own serene blessedness and peace.

A union thus devoted to the domestic virtues, will not only enrich life with its beneficence, but

will hallow the tie that binds together the hearts, too soon to be sundered on earth, — and will crystallize into a crown of unfading lustre, if sanctified by a religious faith; while their memory will be embalmed in undying reverence and love.

We need such social influences for our true moral development as much as the plant needs soil, sunshine and rain. A solitary misanthrope will become a withered plant, a fossil or a mummy.

“Love,” wrote Mrs. Jameson, “is the bread of life, the salt of life is work, the sweetness of life is poetry, and the water of life, faith.” “To love and be loved,” said Sydney Smith, “constitutes the greatest happiness of human existence.”

There is a rapture in pure and refined love, unequalled by any other emotion, — it is of heaven — heavenly. Well may Burns sing: —

“Oh happy love! where love like this is found!

Oh, heart-felt rapture, — bliss beyond compare!

I've paced much this weary, mortal round,

And sage experience bids me this declare, —

If heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,

One cordial in **this** melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
In others' arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening
gale."

It equalizes, more than anything else, the various conditions of our human life; — places, often, the cot beside the palace, the day-laborer near the monarch. Wrote one who bore upon his brow one of the noblest crowns of Europe, "I am the most fortunate of men, and you will not find many, who, like me, after a twenty years' acquaintance, and nineteen years' marriage, finds now the heart of his wife as divine, her eyes as heavenly, as in the first days of his love."

"Marriage," says the great English moralist, "has many cares, but Celibacy has few pleasures." It has not so heavy a yoke as bachelors pretend, nor so easy as husbands assert; yet it would be a much more happy estate than it is generally found, if it were entered upon as it ought to be.

Jeremy Taylor quaintly said, "Marriage

hath in it the labor of love, the delicacies of friendship, the blessings of society and the union of hearts and hands. It hath in it less of beauty, but more of safety than a single life; it is more merry and more sad, — fuller of joys and sorrows; it lies under more burdens, but is supported by the strength of love and charity; and these burdens are delightful.”

Marriage, even an ill-assorted one, may ultimately be rendered harmonious and happy, by mutual attentions, forbearance, and acts of kindness and courtesy. An instance is recorded of an infelicitious union having thus been changed to its opposite. When the unfortunate victims of a rash marriage awoke from their dreamy illusion, it is said that each pitied the other, and pity was soon converted into love.

In some instances, it must be admitted, the result is not so fortunate. In the aisle of the Abbey of St. Albans, there is an inscription upon a tombstone to the memory of a luckless wight. Thomas Shepherd, who, in 1766, died at the age of 30 years, in consequence of his connubial troubles. The inscription reads : —

“Great was my grief, I could not rest;
 God called me hence, He thought it best:
 Unhappy marriage was my fate;
 I did repent when — ’twas too late!”

Job Caudle, when he died, it may be remembered, left a small packet of papers inscribed — “Curtain Lectures delivered in the course of thirty years, by Mrs. Margaret Caudle, and suffered by Job her husband!” His case needs no comment, rather condolence. There is no truth, however, in the old scandal, which we cite simply for the sake of exhibiting its falsity, that —

“Marriage, as old men note, hath likened been
 Unto a public feast, or common rout, —
 Where those who are without, would fain get in!
 And those who are within, would fain get out!”

Like a suit at chancery, marriage is likely to last a lifetime; and both are much easier to get into, than to get out of again. A writer in *Punch*, some years ago, had the audacity thus to estimate matrimony: —

“ Which is of greater value, — prithee, say —

The bridegroom, or the bride ? must the truth be told ?

Alas, it must ; — the bride is given away,

The bridegroom often regularly sold ! ”

The victims (pardon the *lapsus pennæ*) the votaries, of Cupid have been classified, but their varieties are too numerous to specify in detail ; we present but two or three, as examples. The loving couple, so lavish of tender epithets, are prone to make public exhibition of their mutual devotion, much to the disgust of old bachelors and elderly maiden ladies.

Then there is the disputatious pair, who are never content but when in controversy about some minor matter of domestic economy. It is the standing dish upon which they feed and felicitate each other, at the expense of all the nameless amenities and charities which render home happy. The frigid couple are the reverse of the loving ; they are seldom found together ; if the one is out, the other is at home, and *vice versa* ; but when they both remain at home they are taciturn, dull and drowsy. They are enigmas to all, and to themselves ; they rarely quar-

rel, since it would disturb their notions of etiquette, and in the torpor of ennui, they content themselves.

There is yet another variety, — the plausible pair — just the reverse of the last noted, who are highly excitable, ecstatic and lavish in the use of superlatives and expletives upon all matters of daily life. Exaggeration is their usual style of colloquy, and their denunciations are as emphatically given, as their commendations.

What singular spectacles — we should say, pairs of spectacles — are occasionally seen in our popular promenades, — ladies of towering altitude allied to dwarfish bipeds, who seem as though they were intended rather for the effect of contrast than equality; while on the other hand, there are monster specimens of men linked with abbreviated specimens of the feminine, — as though, in regarding matrimony as a necessary evil, they had resolved upon the least.

The “Prince of Punsters” has a humorous lyric on this point, entitled “Paired not matched;” so good that we must introduce it to the reader: —

“Of wedded bliss, bards sing amiss, I cannot make a song
of it;
For I am small, my wife is tall, and that's the short and
long of it.
She gives to me the weakest tea, and takes the whole
Souchong of it,
For I am small, my wife is tall, and that's the short and
long of it.
Against my life, she'll take a knife, or fork, and dart the
prong of it;
For she is tall, and I am small, and that's the short and
long of it.”

Women are the great physiognomists, — they can generally distinguish the married from the single; we all know they have the faculty of intuition, but in this respect, they seem to possess a sort of “second sight.” To woman's keen, discriminating glance, the fact of matrimony or bachelorship is written so legibly in a man's appearance, that no ingenuity can conceal it. It has been conjectured that it may consist in a certain subdued look — or demure aspect, such as that which characterizes the lions caged in a menagerie, as distinguished from those lords of the desert, who roam at large, in all their native dignity and strength. If this be not an aid to

the solution, we leave the matter open for the gentle reader's reflection, at leisure.

That same excellent humorist and true poet,
— Hood has something on this subject, also : —

— "Well, I confess, I did not guess a simple marriage vow
Would make me find all woman-kind such unkind women
now !

They need not, sure, as distant be as Java or Japan, —
Yet every Miss reminds me this — I'm not a single man !

* * * * *

Go where I will, I but intrude, I'm left in crowded rooms,
Like Zimmerman on solitude, or Hervey at the tombs.
From head to heel, they make me feel of quite another
clan,

Compelled to own, though left alone, — I'm not a single
man !

My spouse is fond of homely life, and all that sort of
thing ;

I go to balls without my wife, and never wear a ring ;
And yet each Miss to whom I come, as strange as Gen-
glis Khan,

Knows by some sign, I can't divine — I'm not a single
man !"

Man and wife seldom resemble each other in disposition. The reason for this dissimilarity has been supposed to be the fact that every one

respects another for the quality — good or bad — which he himself wants. Besides, this sort of opposition prevents the holy and happy state from getting flat, as it otherwise would, and produces upon it the same effects as acids upon an alkali.

The worthy Bishop of Durham, was lamenting to Dr. Paley, the death of his wife, — “ We have lived nineteen years together,” said the bishop, “ and never had two opinions about anything in all the time ; what think you of that, doctor ? ” “ Indeed, my lord,” replied Paley, “ I think it must ha’ been vera flat.” Few will, we think, differ from the doctor in opinion.

In the economy of nature the thunder-storm is as needful to physical health, as the life-kindling beams of the sun : something like this may possibly obtain in the domestic economy. Storms are, however, in both estates far less frequent than sunshine and clear skies.

“ Love born in hours of joy and mirth,
 With mirth and joy may flourish ;
 That to which darker hours gave birth,
 Still more and more we cherish.

**It looks beyond the clouds of time
And through death's shadowy portal ;
Made by adversity sublime,
By faith and hope immortal."**

As a great part of the infelicities of married life arises from trifles, it would be well for the parties respectively to agree together, that in all disputes, whoever was convinced of being in the right should surrender the controversy.

Milton, when blind, married a shrew; a friend, desirous of complimenting the poet on his choice, compared his spouse to a rose. "I can't judge of colors," said Milton, "and it may be as you say, for I feel the thorns daily." When asked, on one occasion, "why a king may, in some countries ascend the throne at fourteen years of age, but may not marry until he is eighteen," Milton replied, "Because it is easier to govern a kingdom than a woman."

But the sceptre which is to rule is one of Love, of gentle persuasion, not of physical power. If a man is once weak enough to be caught by woman's love, he ought to consider himself evermore bound by such sweet cap-

tivity, — the contract still binds him to the same delightful destiny.

— Among some who have read Blackstone, and more who have not, an opinion prevails, that a husband may chastise his wife, provided the weapon be not thicker than his little finger. For the honor of England, we wish we could pronounce this opinion as legally erroneous as it is ungallant and barbarous. —

It is much to our credit as Americans, however, that this relic of barbarism does not disgrace our statute book. In a case which came before the Supreme Court of South Carolina, some years ago, the presiding judge summed up an admirable view of the law on the matrimonial relation, by quoting the following lines from the “Honey-Moon,” which may be said to contain also the law of humanity on the subject.

“ The man that lays his hand upon a woman,
Save in the way of kindness, is a wretch,
Whom 'twere gross flattery to name a coward.”

Married people should study each other's weak parts of character, as skaters look out for

the weak parts of the ice, in order to keep off them. Good temper is not seldom sacrificed in a matrimonial controversy; but it may be recovered by her —

—“ Who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules;
Charms by accepting, by submitting — sways,
Yet has her humor most when she obeys.” —

Nature is full of lessons for us, it is a great volume ever open at our feet, — and we, married persons, should occasionally consult its pages. Sugar is the substance most universally diffused through all natural products, and the lesson this conveys is obvious, — sweetness should prevail everywhere. A discretionary limit, however, should be observed in administering the domestic lumps of sugar; some husbands, for instance, are all the better for a little “ constitutional opposition,” — it is not always safe to let them have everything their own way; even children are spoilt by over-indulgence.

A husband, also should give to his wife, that which every lover lavishes upon his mistress, —

“not only little politenesses, attentions, consideration, but a little of that balm which is the essence of all our life — a little love.”

— “The happiness of life,” said Coleridge, “is made up of minute fractions — the little, soon-forgotten charities of a kiss, a smile, a kind look, a heart-felt compliment in the disguise of playful raillery, and the countless other infinitesimals of pleasurable thought and genial feeling.” Said a large-hearted, literary friend, the other day, when speaking of the immunities of married life, — “I sometimes take pleasure in thinking of what an amount of pure happiness my wife has put into my life, by her gentle love.” —

— With those who truly love, the romance of life is not gone with marriage. No, — with the humblest and most sordid cares of life are intimately associated the calm delights, the settled bliss of home, — where, upon duties in themselves, perhaps, often wearisome and uninteresting, hang the prosperity and happiness of wife and children; — where there is no mean hope, because none in which regard for others

does not largely mingle, — no base fear, because suffering and distress cannot affect self alone, — when the selfishness which turns honest industry to greed, and noble ambition to egotistical love of power, is exercised, — when life becomes a perpetual exercise of duties which are delights, and delights which are duties.” * —

“ He who fails to preserve his love in its early freshness, abandons the respect and the duty which he owes to himself; for if the character of *husband* be of an order at once creative, ennobling and sacred, how noble and sacred must be the being of her who is his co-worker in holiness — the repository of his joys and sorrows, the keeper of his affections and his innocence, and the lovely modeller of the characters of his children. And though the character of *wife* entail a measure of subjectiveness, her many sacrifices are not only such as she would never sustain in devotion to her own sex, but they are frequently of a reciprocal nature, and find reward in the bosom alone of him for whom

* Brindley's Essays.

she suffers them, — in the bosom alone of him, for whose sake she bears the honorable titles of wife and mother, — his all in all — his heaven upon earth!" * Well might Allan Ramsay sing, —

“ Yes, 'tis a *heartsome* thing to be a wife ! ”

One of the most graceful of bridal offerings was the following letter, written by an old friend to a young lady on the eve of her wedding-day :

“ I have sent you a few flowers to adorn the dying moments of your single life. They are the gentlest types of delicate and durable friendship. They spring up by our side when others have deserted it ; and they will be found watching over our graves, when those who should cherish, shall have forgotten us.

“ It seems that a past — so calm and pure as yours — should expire with a kindred sweetness about it, — that flowers and music, kind friends and earnest words, should consecrate the hour when a sentiment is passing into a sacrament.

* Harper's Magazine.

“ The three great stages of our being are the birth, the bridal and the burial. To the first we bring only weakness, — for the last, nothing have we but dust ! But here at the altar, when life joins life, the pair come throbbing up to the holy man, whispering the deep promise that nerves each other’s heart, to help on in the life-struggle of care and duty.

“ The beautiful will be there, borrowing new beauty from the scene. Youth will come to gaze upon the object of its secret yearnings ; and age will totter up to hear the words repeated that to their own lives had given the charm. Some will weep over it as if it were a tomb, and some laugh over it as if it were a joke ; but two must stand by it, for it is fate, not fun, — this everlasting locking of their lives !

And now, can you, who have queened it over so many bending forms, can you come down at last to the frugal diet of a single heart ? Hoping that calm and sunshine may hallow your clasped hands, I sink silently into a signature.”

The story of that notorious shrew, Xantippe,

is well known ; but there is a curious illustration of the benefits of teasing on record, worth mentioning. One of the emperors of the East, Pellgologus, had long been suffering under a painful disease, for which his physicians had prescribed various remedies in vain. His family and the court were waiting the issue with anxiety, when a lady, somewhat advanced in years, demanded a private audience with the empress.

On her admission, she intimated to the empress that nothing was so likely to restore him to health as a little matrimonial discipline, duly and regularly administered ; that is to say, that she should vex and irritate the emperor by every means in her power.

The imperial matron replied, that she was very far from being deficient in so essential and indispensable a part of conjugal duty ; but, like a good wife, she frankly confessed, that, in administering this domestic medicine, she had somewhat relaxed her discipline since her husband's indisposition, lest it might exasperate his complaint. Of this her " privy counsellor " assured the imperial dame there was no danger ; and

finally induced her to dispense, with liberality, a remedy which, from the earliest ages, has been found so salutary. The royal patient, it is added, speedily became convalescent, under this new system of regimen.

The "good wife" is a combination of the virtues: she, by her thrift, repairs losses and transforms poverty into competency; and by her wise economy will sometimes bring wealth out of competency. Besides, the title of mother, which signifies at once wife and mistress of the house, has so real an authority, that "one finds it crowned with an aureole of respect and love." The more elevated the position of woman, the more powerful and refined will be the family; their destinies are united by an indissoluble tie.

"It is no less part of the duty of the wife to promote, as far as may be in her power, the spiritual welfare of her husband. However eligible may be the worldly condition of any couple, however congenial their natural tastes and sentiments, their happiness is very far from being complete, if, as spiritual and immortal beings, they are destitute of that 'lively hope' of au

unfading inheritance, so much spoken of in the Scriptures, which flings its light across the vale of death, and irradiates the prospect of eternity.”*

“Too many,” said John Angel James, “have no idea of the subjection of their temper to the influence of religion, and yet, what is changed, if the temper be not? If a man be as passionate, malicious, sullen, resentful and moody or morose after his conversion, as before it, what is he converted from, or to?”

“If always teasing others, always teased,
His only pleasure is to be — displeased.”

A woman who preserves her temper is a heroine, she is mistress of herself; and this rare gift of self-possession will be its own great reward.

A religious faith is the crowning glory of woman; — so sweet and so natural a thing is piety in woman, that even irreligious men admire it. It is this that softens and elevates her natural

* Hague's “Home Life.”

graces, and adds a charm to all. The more she exhibits in her conduct the spirit of Christianity, the more potent does her influence become. As it is her especial mission to make home happy, so is it hers also to shed over it the reflected light of heavenly truth and virtue; for that only is truly *home* where that hallowed spirit rules.

We are all accustomed to admire the beautiful types of womanhood presented in Sacred Scripture, — so poetic in their pastoral beauty and simplicity — and yet we are apt to forget that it was their virtues and sterling good sense that gave to them their varied charm.

These Biblical portraitures are dissimilar, but delightful to contemplate; glancing adown the long stream of Time, we see Sarah, the beautiful wife of the patriarch, then, in succession, Rebecca, Rachel, Hannah, Esther and Ruth; and of the Christian age, Elizabeth, and her, — most honored among women, — Mary, with Lois, Eunice and a luminous list of others, including Dorcas, Lydia, Priscilla, Phœbe, and others of Apostolic days. How beautifully do they stand out, all radiant with grace and beauty!

Real religion, although so full of repose, is not inactive or indolent. Its fervor is so calm and constant that it is apt to attract little notice from the world. It has not the vividness of the electric flash, but it burns like the beacon-light, and is as cheering and salutary. How silent, yet how earnest and eloquent, are its appeals to the reflective and honest enquirer after truth; and how inexcusable on our part is it to disregard them.

This brief life of ours is too short, even at its longest limit, to be fretted away in discord; let us seek to make the most of it by filling it up with good deeds and good words: so that when we pass into its "sere and yellow leaf," the autumn hours may be gilded by shafts of sunshine—the presage of a more glorious "life to come." Southey must have sung from his heart, those sweet syllables about the eternity of Love:—

They sin, who tell us love can die.

With life, all other passions fly,

All others are but vanity.

* * * *

But love is indestructible!

Its holy flame forever burneth,
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth :
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times opprest ;
It is here tried and purified,
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest.
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest-time of love is there !” —

Love, indeed, when in harmony with conscience — filling the soul with joy, leaving its beauty and peace unchanged, — is the richest treasure of our nature, the most human, and yet the most divine, of our aspirations. It is such a love as we find illustrated in the beautiful life of Lady Rachel Russell, and a few other noble and exemplary women of past times.

Speaking of his heroic and devoted wife, Lord Russell said just prior to his unjust execution : — “ What a blessing she has been to me ! What would have been my misery if she had not had that magnanimity of spirit, joined to her tenderness, as never to have desired me to do a base thing to save my life ! * * Now the bitterness of death is past ! ”

Her solemn and sweet exhortation to her chil

dren, which is annexed, is one of the most beautiful utterances of maternal affection united with piety, on record : — “ O my beloved children, take care we meet again. Do but experience the pleasure of a well-spent life, and the pure delights of meditating on the future state of eternity : that you may do so, and love it, to my last breath you will have the prayers of a truly loving mother. Consider, my dears, that all the innocent delights of life you may take, and have no anxiety of mind with them ; but if they shut out religious thoughts and performances, and devour and take up all our time, then, indeed, we sin ; and conscience will sting at some time or other, and be a sore remembrancer, and check us in our gayety ; but be devout and regular in your duties to God, then Heaven will be secure, and pleasures innocent.”

“ A mother’s love ! If there be one thing pure,
 Where all beside is sullied ; that can endure
 When all else pass away ; if there be aught
 Surpassing human deed, or word or thought, —
 It is a mother’s love ! ”

Perhaps conjugal virtue was never more

aptly panegyricized than in the following eulogy on a matron of the last century ; — “ She was a lady of such symmetrical proportion to her husband, that they seemed to come together by a sort of natural magnetism.”

Speaking of noble wives, reminds us of the mother of Cromwell, to whose worth Forster pays such a beautiful tribute : — “ A woman with the glorious faculty of self-help, when other assistance failed her ; ready for the demands of fortune, in its extremest adverse time ; of spirit and energy equal to her mildness and patience ; who, with the labor of her own hands, gave dowries to five daughters, sufficient to marry them into families as honorable, but more wealthy than their own ; whose single pride was honesty, and whose passion, love ; who preserved in the gorgeous palace at Whitehall, the simple tastes that distinguished her at the old brewery of Huntingdon ; whose only care, amid all her splendors, was for the safety of her beloved son, in his dangerous eminence ; finally, whose closing wish, when that anxious wish had outworn her strength, accorded with her whole modest

and tender history ; — for it implored a simple burial in some country church-yard, rather than the ill-suited trappings of state ceremony, wherewith she feared, and with reason feared, that his highness, the Lord Protector of England, would have carried to some royal tomb ! ”

Among the notable women of the seventeenth century, whose characters were illustrative of the self-denying virtues, was Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke. Besides her six castles, she rebuilt seven churches, which had fallen to ruin in the wars. She spent little on herself, and lived more plainly, and was more simply attired, than her own servants. Bishop Rainbow, speaking of her virtues as a mistress, illustrates her self-denial in the following quaint style : —

“ Yet here I may be bold to tell you something to wonder at ; that she much neglected and treated very harshly one servant, a very ancient one, who served her from her birth, very faithfully, according to her mind, — which ill-usage, therefore, her menial servants as well as her friends and children, much repined at-

And who this servant was, I have named before, — *it was her body*; who, as I said, was a servant, most obsequious to her mind, and served her fourscore years.”

History is replete with illustrious instances of conjugal affection, and heroic virtue in woman. Who is not familiar with the story of Eleanor, queen of Edward I., whose self-sacrificing affection induced her, disregarding all considerations of personal safety, to save her husband's life by sucking the poison from the wound he received from a poisoned arrow while in Palestine? Or of another queen, wife of Ulfeld, of Sweden, who suffered, for her conjugal affection, the dreadful ordeal of forty-three years of cruel imprisonment? Or of the strange, but beautiful love of Vittoria Colonna, who, on the loss of her heroic husband, was so overwhelmed with sorrow, that her faithful heart was incapable of a second attachment? Her fine sonnets, written during her solitude, are full of tenderness, absorbing passion and poetic fancy.

Then again, there are those noble gentle-

women of historic fame ;—Lady Russell, the wives of Sir Walter Raleigh, Colonel Hutchinson, and John Evelyn. Not only did the heroic and noble wife of the gallant Sir Walter share with him his sufferings and sorrows during his cruel incarceration of twelve long years, but she further evinced the depth of her affection for his memory, by remaining unmarried until her death, which happened twenty-nine years after his unmerited execution.

When Sir Richard Fanshaw was taken prisoner, during the Civil War, and was confined in Whitehall, the fidelity of his wife was no less remarkable. “During the time of his imprisonment,” she quaintly says, “I failed not, constantly, when the clock struck four in the morning, to go with a dark lantern in my hand, all alone and on foot, from my lodgings in Chancery Lane, to Whitehall, by the entry that went out of King Street into the Bowling Green : there I would go under his window and call him softly. He, excepting the first time, never failed to put out his head at the first call. Thus we talked together, and sometimes I was

so wet with rain, that it went in at my neck and came out at my heels."

We have already referred to Lord Russell's tribute to his noble wife. When parting from her ill-fated husband in prison, Lady Russell commanded herself with heroic fortitude, and they mutually preserved a solemn and affecting silence.

This excellent woman sustained the loss of her beloved and worthy husband, with the same heroism which she had displayed during his trial and imprisonment; and when in meek and solemn silence, without suffering a tear to escape her, she parted from him forever, her beautiful character appears equally an object of sympathy, admiration and reverence.

The tender solicitude of the wife of the celebrated Grotius, while imprisoned in the castle of Louvestine, affords another example of female courage and devotion. He had been permitted to receive his books in a large trunk, and these were often exchanged for others through the same medium. After he long endured a rigorous captivity, Marie, who shared it with him,

observing that the guards gradually ceased to search the trunk, and having made some holes in it to admit the air, induced her husband to place himself within it; she closed the trunk, and when the guards came for it, she closed the curtains of his bed and affected to be much distressed at his indisposition. In this manner Grotius obtained his liberty; and the authorities, upon learning from her own lips the stratagem she had practised, — being ashamed to construe this harmless contrivance into a crime, permitted her to rejoin her husband.

Similar instances of noble self-sacrifice occurred in Paris during the Reign of Terror; amongst the number, that of the heroic madame Lavalette, — who effected her husband's rescue by taking his place in the condemned cell, — will occur to the reader. When the heads of the different departments were each vindicating themselves to the king from any share in the blame of the escape, his majesty coolly replied, “I do not see that anybody has done their duty except Madame Lavalette.”

But it is needless to cite further instances to

prove what everybody admits, and none have the temerity to deny ; yet, it is not unprofitable to remember such noble illustrations of the beautiful and morally grand in the character of woman, as incentives and examples. It is needless to extend the scroll of illustrious wives, or exemplary husbands ; although it would form a beautiful page of human history. It must suffice simply to mention the names of a few, — Oberlin, Wieland, Schiller, John Howard, and the eccentric artist, Blake — who, just before his death, when his faithful wife stood at his bedside, exclaimed, “ Stay, Kate, keep just as you are, I will draw your portrait — for you have ever been an angel to me.”

We might group together numberless instances of the kind, but must content ourselves with citing the remarkable case, mentioned in “ *Once-a-Week* : ” it is as follows : —

“ We have none of us heard a story lately — full of a more solemn sweetness than this — a story as animating as it is mournful, of such a wife with her husband at sea. Each age has its own mode of disclosure of the moral greatness,

of the men and women of the time ; and in this case, through the ways and circumstances of our century — of even the latter half of it — we see in Mrs. Patton the mind and soul of the best wife of the noblest Crusader of six centuries ago.

“ One February day, four years since, the people who happened to be on the Battery at New York, saw that a sick person was being carried in a litter from a ship to the Battery Hotel. Beside the litter walked a young girl, as a careless passenger might have supposed : but others were struck by the strangeness of such youthfulness in one with so careworn a face. She was also obviously near her confinement. She was twenty, in fact, and had been married three years to the man in the litter.

“ She had been brought up in gaiety and indulgence in a prosperous home in East Boston, and had married a gallant young sea captain. In the first days of the honeymoon, Captain Patton was offered the command of the Neptune's Car, a ship fitted out for the circumnavigation of the globe, and delayed by the illness of the commander. Captain Patton declined this great

piece of professional advancement, on the ground that he could not leave his bride, for so long a time, at an hour's warning. He was told she might go with him; she was willing, and they were established on board within twelve hours from the first proposal being made.

“ They were absent a year and five months; and from the outset she made herself her husband's pupil, companion and helper, to his great delight. She studied navigation, and learned everything that he could teach her, and was soon habituated to take observations, steer by the chart, and keep the ship's reckoning.

“ In August, 1856, they sailed again in their beloved vessel for California, making sure that the ship they were so proud of, and so familiar with, would beat two others which started at the same time. The race which ensued disclosed to Captain Patton the evil temper and designs of his first mate, who was evidently bent on defeating his purpose, and, for some unknown reason, on carrying the ship into Valparaiso. Before Cape Horn was reached, the captain was suffer-

ing from anxiety and vigilance. There it was necessary to depose the mate; and under the toil of supplying his place, Captain Patton's health gave way entirely. A fever was followed by congestion of the brain; but he had had time to put his wife in full possession of his purposes. The ship was by no means to go to Valparaiso; for the crew would desert, and the cargo be lost before the consignees could arrive. His honor and conscience were concerned, he said, in going to the right port. This settled everything in his wife's mind. The ship should go to her destined port, and no other.

“ Her husband became hopelessly delirious; and the mate seized the opportunity to assume authority. He wrote a letter to Mrs. Patton, warning her not to oppose him, and charging her with the responsibility of the fate of every man in the vessel, if she presumed to interfere. She replied that her husband had not trusted him while he was well; and she should not trust him now that her husband was ill.

“ She assembled the crew, told them the facts, and appealed to them. Would they accept her

authority in her husband's place, disregard the first mate, and work the ship under the orders of the second? Every man of them agreed, and she had nothing to complain of from them. They did what they could to sustain her. They saw her at her studies, as they passed the cabin windows, and regarded her with reverence and pity, — a young wife, soon to be a mother, alone among men, with her husband to nurse and control, the crew to command, and their lives to preserve by her learning and professional skill! There she sat at her desk by lamplight, — now studying medical books which could instruct her on her husband's case; now keeping the reckoning, and making entries in the log. At noon and at midnight she was on deck, taking an observation. She marked the charts, made no mistakes, and carried the ship into port in fine condition on the 13th of November.

Captain Patton was a Freemason: and the Freemasons at San Francisco were kind, sending them back to New York by the first ship that could take them. They arrived wholly destitute, -- the husband, blind, deaf, delirious, dying:--

the wife grave and composed, but bent upon reaching Boston before her confinement. This aim she could not accomplish : her husband was too ill to be removed, and her child was born in a strange place.

“ The New York underwriters immediately sent her a thousand dollars as a gift ; and the owners of the vessel and cargo at once took steps to testify their sense of her conduct. Under singular extremity, she had considered the interests of the crew, and saved a vast amount of property to the owners ; and the valor and conscientiousness of this lonely young creature were thoroughly appreciated. The truth was, it was to her husband that she devoted herself. She wrought out his purpose, and saved his honor.”

An admirable instance of wifely consideration and delicacy of feeling is exemplified in the following incident : it was that of a marriage between an honest, but illiterate locksmith and a village belle. When the former was asked to sign his name, he made a cross ; and the latter, receiving the pen, did the same. When the bridemaid, well knowing she could write, ex-

pressed astonishment that she did not sign her name, the wife replied, "would you have me put my husband to the blush?" "If he can't write, no more should I. To-morrow I will begin to teach him!" Love is said to laugh at locksmiths, he seems to have pitied, rather than laughed, in this instance.

"The love which thus colors with its radiant tints the common things of life, which makes even poverty beautiful, and the cottage richer than the palace, will be sure to teach the heart which possesses it, how to manage the husband. In 'managing a man,' — an important lesson, which some women are very anxious to impress upon others — immense tact and delicacy are needed, but are very seldom found. Wives should remember that they had better never try to manage, than try and not succeed. And yet all men like to be managed, and require management.

No one can pretend to be the be-all and end-all in a house. It is from his wife that the husband should learn the true value of things — his own dignity, his position, and even his sec-

ondary position by her side, as manageress. But if she be wise, she will not make this too apparent. Directly the voice gets too loud, the tone too commanding, and the manner too fussy, the unhappy man begins to suspect that he is being managed, and in nine cases out of ten, sinks into utter imbecility, or breaks away like an obstinate pig. Both these symptoms are bad, and perhaps the first is the worst." *

There is excellent counsel in the following passage, from a recent writer, worthy of adoption by all who would make home productive of the truest happiness :

- “ Only let a woman be sure she is precious to her husband — not useful, not valuable, not convenient simply, but lovely and beloved ; let her be the recipient of his polite and hearty attentions, let her feel that her cares and love are noticed, appreciated and returned ; let her opinion be asked, her approval sought and her judgment respected in matters of which she is cognizant ; in short, let her only be beloved, hon-

* “ Gentle Life.”

ored and cherished, in fulfilment of the marriage vow, and she will be to her husband, her children and society, a well-spring of happiness. She will bear pain and toil and anxiety, for her husband's love to her is a tower and fortress. Shielded and sheltered therein, and adversity will have lost its sting. She may suffer, but sympathy will dull the edge of sorrow. —

— “A house with love in it — and by love I mean love expressed in words and looks and deeds ; for I have not one spark of faith in love that never crops out — is to a house without love, as a person to a machine ; one is life, the other is a mechanism. —

— “The unloved woman may have bread just as light, a house just as tidy as the other ; but the latter has a spring of beauty about her, a joyousness, a penetrating and pervading brightness, to which the former is an entire stranger. The deep happiness of her heart shines out in her face. She gleams over. It is airy and graceful and warm and welcoming with her presence ; she is full of devices and plots and sweet surprises for husband and family. She

has never done with the romance and poetry of life. She herself is a lyric poem setting herself to all pure and gracious melodies. Humble household ways and duties have for her a golden significance. The prize makes her calling high, and the end sanctifies the means. 'Love is heaven, and heaven is love!'

Pictures plentiful are to be seen, all about us, of domestic felicity, urging non-participants, by their sweet persuasives, to share in its perennial pleasures; if we would only open our hearts, and surrender them to their sweet influences. One would suppose that the most incorrigible of bachelors would scarcely be proof against the following appeal:—

—“Health and comfort, children fair,
 Wife to meet you at the door,
 Fond hearts throbbing for you there;
 Tell me, would you ask for more?
 Little labor, little strife,
 Little care, and little cot;
 Would you sigh for single life?
 Would you murmur at your lot?
 Tell me, should you?
 If you owned the cottage, would you?”* —

* Alfred Ward.

We have, of course, heard of such things as “Lovers’ quarrels,” since “the course of true love never did run smooth;” need we wonder that even married life is found not wholly exempt from discord. Tennyson tells a touching instance of the kind, in a couple of stanzas, which have found their echo in many a sensitive heart: —

“As through the land at eve we went,
And plucked the ripened ears;
We fell out, — my wife and I,
O! we fell out, — I know not why
And kissed again with tears.

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There, above the little grave,
O, there above the little grave,
We kissed again with tears.”

The jarring notes of discord, which occasionally disturb the serenity and sweet enjoyment of wedded life, would cease to vibrate upon the ear, were the affectionate solitudes of courtship mutually continued in the connubial relation.

— Daily duty and daily toil would become never irksome, but invested with an ever-enduring charm, by the magic of an approving or a kindly word, a kiss, or a smile; and homely, every-day life may be made beautiful by a little infusion of those gentle courtesies which cost so little, and yet are so highly prized. It is to the neglect of these little “domestic charities,” that most matrimonial infelicities may be traced. —

— Husbands, for the most part, are the culpable parties in this respect, — lavishly prodigal in their love-devotions before marriage, they seem to become no less penurious in their demonstrations afterwards, — as if to atone for their first folly, they need commit another. Such a character, we may well suppose, would be capable of styling a woman “an angel, a month before marriage, and a month after death.” —

No history, however, can reveal to us the multitude of noble wives, whose heroic virtue, patient endurance and gentle love, have been to every true husband, an “over payment” of richest enjoyment for tender solicitude and affection on their part.

“Honor to woman! To her it is given
To garnish the earth with the roses of heaven!
All blessed, she linketh the loves in their choir,
In the veil of the graces her beauty concealing,
She tends on each altar that’s hallowed to feeling,
And keeps ever living the fire.”

Washington Irving, thus beautifully expresses his tribute to marriage: — “I have noticed that a married man falling into misfortune is more apt to retrieve his situation in the world than a single one, chiefly because his spirits are softened and relieved by domestic endearments; and self-respect kept alive by finding that, although all abroad be darkness and humiliation, yet still there is a little world of love at home, of which he is monarch; whereas a single man is apt to run to waste and self-neglect — to fall to ruin, like a deserted mansion, for want of inhabitants.

“I have often had occasion to mark the fortitude with which women sustain the most overwhelming reverses of fortune. Those disasters which break down the spirit of man and prostrate him in the dust, seem to call forth all the energies of the softer sex, and give such intre-

pidity and elevation to their character, that at times it approaches to sublimity.

“Nothing can be more touching than to behold a soft, and tender female, who had been all weakness and dependence, and alive to every trivial roughness, while treading the prosperous path of life, suddenly rising in mental force to be the comforter and supporter of the husband under misfortunes, abiding with unshrinking firmness the bitterest blasts of adversity.

“As the vine, which has long twined its graceful foliage about the oak, and has been lifted by it into sunshine, will, when the hardy plant is rifted by the thunderbolt, cling round it with its caressing tendrils, and bind up its shattered boughs, so, too, it is beautifully ordained by Providence that woman, who is the ornament and dependent of man in his happier hours, should be his stay and solace when smitten with dire and sudden calamity, winding herself into the rugged recesses of his nature, tenderly supporting his drooping head, and binding up his broken heart.”

One of the most eminent of her sex, Mrs. Jameson, speaking of the mission of woman,

has said: "It is hers to keep alive all those pure, gentler, and more genial sympathies, — those refinements in morals, in sentiments, in manners, without which men, exposed to the rougher influences of every-day life, and in the struggle with this selfish world, might degenerate (do degenerate, for the case is not hypothetical,) into mere brutes."

Such is the beautiful theory of woman's existence, — preached to her by moralists, sung to her by poets, — till it has become the world's creed, and her own faith. Great, indeed, is the task assigned to woman, — who can overestimate its importance? While it is not woman's province to enact laws, to lead armies, or to govern empires, it is yet hers to train up and instruct the frail and as yet spotless creature, whose moral, no less than his physical, being must be derived from her, for those duties which in the world's great theatre of action await him.

All the social virtues and graces are so indissolubly linked with the domestic hearth and with woman, that all projected reforms should be social rather than civil, and should conduce to

the promotion of her fitness for her home-life. Longfellow endorses the sentiment in one of his beautiful poems, thus : —

“ The world of the affections, is thy world, —
 Not that of man’s ambition ; in that stillness
 Which most becomes a woman — calm and holy —
 Thou sittest by the fireside of the heart,
 Feeding its flame.”

To inspire those principles, to inculcate those doctrines, to animate those sentiments which generations yet unborn and nations yet uncivilized, shall learn to bless, is her high prerogative. It is hers, also, to soften firmness into mercy, to chasten honor into refinement, by tenderness to disarm passion, by purity to triumph over sense, and to exhibit on this “ care-begirt world ” of ours, a type of that love — pure, constant and ineffable — which is native to the skies. Diligence in everything appertaining to the sphere of domestic life ought to be regarded as more essential to the development of true womanly character, than the mere ornamental accomplishments, so eagerly courted in the present day.

“When a man of sense comes to marry,” wrote Hannah More, “it is not merely a creature who can paint, sing, draw, dress and dance; it is a being who can comfort, and counsel him — who can reason and reflect, feel and judge, discourse and discriminate; — one who can assist him in his affairs and lighten his cares, — soothe his sorrows, purify his joys, strengthen his principles and educate his children.”

Life is not all poetry, romance and music, — duties, as well as delights, are its allotment. It should be remembered that the marriage relation presupposes grave moral and rational obligations, itself being but the means to an end.

“You may laugh as you like, old fellow, and think it the rarest of sport,
But there's never a lass, to my thinking, like Bessie that lives in our Court.
I know that she is not a beauty as far as the face may go,
And I know that she is not so handsome as many that you might show;
But the thought of her, Ned, is a blessing that fills me by night and by day,
And keeps me far better and wiser than ever my tongue can say;

And the sight of her, too, is a picture — the trim little
 bonnet and gown,
 The tiny feet tripping so lightly, the face looking shyly
 down ;
 The eyes with their luminous splendor, — ah, lad, they
 would make you stare —
 And the sunshine that glimmers and dances, and falls
 from her yellow hair ;
 The sound of her voice, why, it's music, that thrills like
 the song of a bird, —
 The sweetest, the best, and the dearest that ever my ears
 have heard ;
 And the kind little heart, that is beating as truthful as
 truth may be —
 Ah, these are the things that have made her the angel she
 is to me ! ” *

— Many a marriage begins like a rose-bud of
 spring, — full of promise and beauty, but for
 the light and warmth of a little love, its fair
 blossoms too soon fade away and perish under
 winter's snows.— What was fabled of the “ foun-
 tain of perpetual youth,” has its realization, in
 some degree, in those who cherish a cheerful
 and thankful spirit. There are some women
 who seem never to grow old — women, who,

* M. Barr.

without any special effort, retain their attractiveness and charm always unimpaired by age. The charm lies in a sunny temper, — the happy faculty of looking always on the bright side of things, and of screening the foibles and frailties of others with the mantle of sweet charity.

“The kindest and the happiest pair,
Will find occasion to forbear;
And something every day they live,
To pity, and, perhaps — forgive.”

There is a touching little incident recorded of the wife of one, Newman Hagar, something less common than ordinary nature — something better than mere womanhood. After many years of married life, old Newman was once asked, “whether he had not sometimes scolded his wife?” He was silent, but his spouse took up the reply, — “Never to signify,” she said, “and if he has, I deserved it.” “And I dare say, if the truth were told, you have scolded him quite as often,” was the rejoinder. “Nay,” said the old, but yet young and tender-hearted wife, “how could I scold him who has been work-

ing for me and the little ones all the day? It may be for a man to be peevish, for it is he who bears the crosses of the world; but who should make him forget them, if not his own wife? And, indeed, she had best for her own sake, for nobody can scold much, when the scolding is all on one side."

A great British statesman found time to indite a few lines to this theme:—

" In vain the stealing hand of Time
 May pluck the blossoms of their prime :
 Envy may talk of bloom decayed, —
 How lilies drop and roses fade ;
 But constancy's unaltered truth —
 Regardful of the vows of youth, —
 Affection, that recalls the past,
 And bids the pleasing influence last,
 Shall still preserve the lover's flame,
 In every scene of life the same ;
 And still with fond endearments blend
 The wife, the mistress and the friend."

Marriage, whether it be regarded as a necessity, a happy accident or a golden chance, ought not to be heedlessly rushed into as a speculation; but discreetly and religiously performed. "Mar-

riages should be founded upon qualities that will last, rather than upon mere caprice or humor. When a man founds a household, it ought to be done upon moral grounds; he that so selects will make a household a blessing." *

A strange thirst for notoriety seems to possess some people; if they cannot attract admiration they seemed determined to arrest attention by their absurdity or daring. Some, of airy notions, take their brides and priests up in balloons, in order that their nuptial ceremonies may astonish the gazing multitude. While others, who prefer terra firma, assert their importance by the blaze of pageantry and extravagant display. Sometimes people are moved to marry for money merely, others link themselves for life, at random, out of mere spite, to pique those who oppose their first choice; and many more are lured to wedlock by a pretty face or figure. We have read somewhere of an honest Hibernian who, not being addicted to too frequent ablutions, confessed to having married a wife to keep him clean!

* H. W. Beecher.

We occasionally hear of unequal alliances, — some doting old bachelor, who has survived his wits, marrying his cook ; or some reckless *roué*, skilled in seductive arts, beguiling innocence to its fate. These, however, are anomalous instances — the abnormal and irregular growths, — the exceptions to the rule of marriage compacts.

Marriages are not so commonly unhappy, as some persons suspect ; most of those who complain of connubial miseries, generally, have themselves to blame, — they have as much satisfaction as their natures would have been susceptible of in any other condition. It is best of course, as a rule, to marry within your own sphere of life — neither much above, nor below, your own station. Some worthy men rush into marriage with women of whom they are afterwards ashamed ; and in the same manner charming women become linked to partners, whose vulgarity they are obliged perpetually to screen. The stern reality appears after the fiery brilliancy of the honeymoon has “ faded into the light of common day.”

Again we say, seek to cherish a spirit of,

cheerfulness and good humor; a good joyous laugh is a beam of sunshine in a house, and life without its light is a dreary existence. By cheerfulness, we mean — a contented, kind, loving and generous disposition, more appreciative of the happiness of others than self. They who dare not indulge a generous laugh, are usually sour-tempered, discontented, self-conceited, and, like a moral Upas-tree, cast a deadly influence over all that surround them.

Luther's married life illustrates our subject — quaint and old-style as it may seem to our modern ideas. “Catharine Bora, the lady whom he chose for his wife, was a nun of good family, left homeless and shelterless by the breaking up of her convent. She was an ordinary, unimaginative body, plain in person and plain in mind, in no sense whatever a heroine of romance, but a decent, sensible, commonplace Haus Frau. The age of romance was over with both of them; yet, for all that, never marriage brought a plainer blessing with it. They began with respect, and ended with steady affection. ‘The happiest life on earth,’ Luther used to say,

‘is with a pious, good wife; in peace and quiet, contented with a little, and giving God thanks.’”

He spoke from his own experience: his Katie, as he called her, was not clever, and he had humorous stories to tell of the beginning of their adventures together. “The first year of married life is an odd business,” he says; “at meals, where you used to be alone, you are yourself and somebody else. When you awake in the morning, there are a pair of tails close to you on the pillow. My Katie used to sit with me when I was at work, she thought she ought not to be silent: she did not know what to say, so she would ask me — ‘Herr Doctor, is not the master of the ceremonies in Prussia, the brother of the Margrave?’”

“In one of the manufacturing districts of the North of England,” wrote a tourist, — “we entered one house tenanted by a young couple whom I first mistook for brother and sister. They were husband and wife, about six years married, but, fortunately, without children. Their scanty provisions consisted mainly of

meal, porridge and oaten cake. Their furniture had nearly all been sold piece-meal to supply pressing necessities, and even their clothes, in part, pawned. Amidst all this privation, he was asked whether he did not repent his early and imprudent marriage. He paused, looked fondly at his wife, who returned his gaze with a melancholy smile of endearing affection, — he dashed the tear aside, and calmly replied — ‘Never! we have been happy, and have suffered together; she has been the same to me all through!’ ”

What a beautiful and touching illustration of the triumph of good over evil, of integrity and affection bidding defiance to suffering and privation. And what a commentary it offers to those who revel in luxury and extravagance, and yet whose existence is a life of splendid misery.

“It is an evil influence in the dominion of Fashion, that it seduces or forces a man from an honorable loyalty to himself: in other words, fashion is the science of appearances, and it inspires one with the desire to *seem* rather than to *be*. The fear of losing caste, and of what the

people will say, and the wish to be reported gay, munificent, rich, — does not the great evil which stares one in the face, as he looks around upon this metropolis — the great sin and shame of extravagance, — take its rise in this?" *

Happy marriages, not a few, have obtained even among the *genus irritabile*. It is true, some have had a dash of the romantic and eccentric in them; as in the instances of Balzac and Lamartine, who won the affections of their wives by their literature. Who would have suspected that the grave and sagacious "Poet of Paradise" would have been carried captive by a giddy girl with a pretty face or figure; or that the ponderous Dr. Johnson would have fallen in love with a woman, old enough to have been his mother, and not remarkable for either beauty or wit? But our surprise is lessened as we recall the somewhat analogous cases of Addison, Steele, Molière, Goethe and others, equally conspicuous in literary annals.

A most tender and romantic attachment

* Chapin.

crowned the unions of Klopstock and Gesner ; the latter confessed that “ whatever were his talents, the person who had most contributed to their development, was his wife.”

Similar testimony is recorded by Sir James Mackintosh ; and John Stuart Mill assures us “ all that he had written for many years belongs as much to his estimable wife, as to himself.” We all know what a happy home-life was that of Sir Walter Scott ; his was a “ love-match,” and wore well for thirty years. The domestic histories of Wordsworth, Southey and Professor Wilson were similar instances.

The marriage of Jeffries was a striking illustration of reliance upon Providence, and faith in the future results of industry, thrift and perseverance. He married on one hundred pounds sterling a year, — a magnanimous adventure, which few — very few, with far less wit and wisdom, would attempt at the present day.

D’Israeli, in his “ Illustrations of the Literary Character” referring to that devotee to literature and republicanism, — Thomas Hollis, — remarks, that “ If ever a man of letters lived in a state

of energy and excitement which might raise him above the atmosphere of social love, it was assuredly this enthusiast. He would not marry, lest marriage should interrupt the labors of his platonic politics. But his extraordinary memoirs, while they show an intrepid mind in a robust frame, bear witness to the self-tormentor — who had trodden down the natural bonds of domestic life. Hence the deep ‘dejection of his spirits,’ — those incessant cries that he has no ‘one to advise, assist, or cherish those magnanimous pursuits in him.’ ”

“ At length he retreated into the country, in utter hopelessness. “ I go not into the country for attentions to agriculture, as such, nor attentions of interest of any kind, which I have ever despised as such ; but as a *used man*, to pass the remainder of a life in tolerable sanity and quiet, after having given up the flower of it, voluntarily, day, week, month, year after year successive to each other, to public service, and being no longer able to sustain, in body or mind, the labors that I have chosen to go through without falling speedily into the great-

est disorders, and it might be, imbecility itself!" This is no coloring, but the exact, plain truth, and Gray's —

“Poor moralist, and what art thou
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets.”

Poor Hood, who had a laborious life, lived to delight and instruct the world at his own expense; yet after all his struggles with sickness and poverty, what a beautiful life it was, — how enriched by the pure gold of enduring, reciprocal love. Well might he sing: —

“The love which I would give, and seek, —
Whose health is of no hue to feel decay
With cheeks' decay, that have a rosy prime:
Love is its own great loveliness alway,
And takes new lustre from the touch of Time.”

We have not alluded to others still living of the gifted men of genius, — the Brownings, Tennysons, Bryants, Longfellows and Lowells,

with others, whose domestic history affords such a beautiful illustration of the happy union of refined minds, consecrated with the incense of genius and the sanctities of a religious faith. Nor are there wanting multitudes of similar examples, no less noteworthy — although unrecorded — that continue to grace the quiet retreats of private life. On the other hand, what more inspiring illustration of true loyalty and devotion in the domestic relation could be desired than is presented to us by the reigning Queen of England? Wealth or poverty are accidents of life, but love confers happiness alike upon all.

“In ourselves the sunshine dwells,
From ourselves the music swells;
By ourselves our life is fed
With sweet, or bitter, daily bread.”

Very beautifully has our great American essayist portrayed the distinctive characteristics of the sexes in their domestic relations :

“Man is the creature of interest and ambition. His nature leads him forth into the strug-

gle and bustle of the world. Love is but the establishment of his early life, or a song piped in the intervals of the acts. He seeks for fame, for fortune, for space in the world's thought, and dominion over his fellow-men. But a woman's whole life is but a history of the affections. The heart is her world: it is there her ambition strives for empire; it is there her avarice seeks for hidden treasures. She sends forth her sympathies on adventure; she embarks her whole soul in the traffic of affection; and if shipwrecked, her case is hopeless — for it is a bankruptcy of the heart.”*

Lowell sums up the beautiful attribute of her nature, in a single stanza :

“ Blessing she is, — God made her so;
And deeds of week-day holiness
Fall from her noiseless as the snow;
Nor hath she ever chanced to know,
That aught were easier than to bless.”

Moral beauty will win worshippers, we re-

* Washington Irving

peat, however unadorned may be the shrine whence it emanates; for she who looks good, cannot fail to be good looking. Woman's real wealth consists, not in mere physical beauty, which at the best is evanescent, but in the sphere of the affections. To love is her mission and high prerogative; to be beloved, her reward; and the requital is not, in the majority of instances, withheld. A writer in the North British Review, referring to the subject, remarks:

“ There remains, after marriage, much more of the respectful devotion, and the self-denying tenderness of the lover, with most men, than a good husband will choose publicly to display, or a good wife to boast of; nor would we disturb the veil beneath which an infinite amount of conjugal benevolence and courtesy prefers to flourish, even though its opacity be thickened with slander against domestic manners, uttered by gentlemen and ladies whose forwardness to denounce the state of modern life in this regard is commonly in direct proportion to their misconception on the subject.

Gentleness is the talismanic charm of women,

not self assertion and boldness ; and a soft voice, according to our great poet, is an excellent thing in woman, while the opposite is sure to disenchant, if not offend the ear of taste and refinement. Woman, also, never gains so much as by concession, and is never so likely to overcome, as when she seems to yield, — “ she stoops to conquer.”

Gentleness in her whole deportment prepossesses at first sight, — “ it insinuates itself into the vantage ground, and gains the best position by surprise.” Gentleness is one of the Christian graces, and its persuasive power begets gentleness in return. Christianity indorses the principle of woman’s sphere of action, being subordinate to that of man, although it recognizes it as no less honorable and important. The modern theories which are adverse to this doctrine are, therefore, anti-Scriptural and erroneous in theory, as their tendency is pernicious in practice.

It has been well said that “ love makes obedience lighter than liberty ; while the graces are never so lovely as when seen waiting on the vir-

tues; and where they thus dwell together, they make a heavenly home.”* In fine, gentleness, truthfulness and generous forbearance, are the jewels that enrich and beautify domestic life. Napoleon once said, — “ I win nothing but battles, — but Josephine, by her goodness, wins all hearts.”

One of the secrets of making home-life happy, is the rare faculty of looking habitually on the sunny side of things, — of wearing ever a cheerful smile. This will dissipate the darkness of sorrow, and irradiate the brightness of joy, — will disarm the former of its sting, and impart a zest to the latter that nothing else can supply.

A cheerful, quiet spirit, that finds its truest enjoyment in accepting life as it is, — determined to make the best of it, — is a boon whose value is above rubies. A spirit that indulges not in scandal, but draws the mantle of charity over all faults and frailties, and notes only the bright features of character : — such a temper of mind

* W. R. Alger.

sheds a halo of beauty over the face, also, that even old age cannot destroy.

“ O woman ! though thy fragile form
Bows, like the willow to the storm,
Yet in thy very weakness strong,
Thou winn’st thy noiseless path along,
Weaving thy influence with the ties
Of sweet domestic charities,
And softening haughtier spirits down
By happy contact with thine own.”

There is much good plain counsel in a letter written by Dean Swift, to a young lady on her marriage, worthy to be reproduced here. He says : —

—“ The grand affair of your life will be, to gain and preserve the esteem of your husband. Neither good nature nor virtue will suffer him to *esteem* you against his judgment ; and although he is not capable of using you ill, yet you will, in time, become to him indifferent and perhaps contemptible ; unless you can supply the loss of youth and beauty, with more durable qualities. You have but a very few years to be young and handsome in the eyes of the world,

and as few months to be so in the eyes of a husband, who is not a fool; for I hope you do not still dream of charms and raptures, which marriage ever did, and ever will, put a sudden end to."

The respect paid to woman in our day is far more real and influential than it was in the times of Paladin and Troubadour, who rendered such idolotrous homage to the sex. Woman was then a being, idealized and illustrated by fervent strains and chivalrous deeds; but as this was homage to her beauty merely, it was as tinsel to true gold compared with our modern estimate of woman's worth.

No reflective man will deny that woman is man's "better half";—she really is so, notwithstanding the phrase is often used half in jest, or satire. To retain this noble distinction, therefore, all true women should seek to foster and cultivate in her sisters, the more sterling elements of character.

In our rambling researches among matrimonial records, we meet with some anomalous and remarkable statements; but as they are

chronicled by grave historiographers, they of course must be reliable. St. Jerome mentions a widow that married her twenty-second husband, who, in his turn had been married to twenty wives! There is an instance recorded at Bordeaux, in 1772, of a gentleman who had been married sixteen times. A woman, named Elizabeth Nasè, who died in Florence, in 1768, had been married to seven husbands. She was at the ripe age of 70, when last led to the hymeneal altar; and she contrived to survive her "beloved." When on her death-bed, it is stated, she recalled the good and bad points of each of her husbands, and having impartially weighed in her mind the *pros* and *cons*, she determined that the fifth claimed the highest merit; and ordered her grave to be with his.

In 1768, a redoubtable pair were living in Essex, England, who had been married eighty-one years; the husband being 107 years old, and his spouse only four years his junior. This is not the only instance of the longevity of the marriage-tie — similar cases are on record

in Nottingham and Gloucester, and elsewhere. In most such instances, when death severed the bond, the survivor died the next day.

It is rather singular that no Shaksperian critic has commented upon the fact that the great poet left the lady of his love — Anne Hathaway, for seventeen years; and yet, although as far as we know, he gave no account of his thus playing truant, she received him back with all the welcome of a true wife.

“ In the pressure that now weighs upon all persons of limited fortune, sisters, nieces, and daughters, are the only commodities that our friends are willing to bestow upon us for nothing, and which we cannot afford to accept, even gratuitously. It seems to have been the same, at a former period, in France. Maitre Jean Picard tells us that when he was returning from the funeral of his wife, doing his best to look disconsolate, such of the neighbors as had grown-up daughters and cousins came to him, and kindly implored him not to be inconsolable, as they could give him a second wife. “ Six weeks after,” says Maitre Jean, “ I lost my

cow, and though I really grieved upon this occasion, not one of them offered to give me another."

It has been recorded by some anti-connubial wag, that when two widowers were once condoling together on the recent bereavement of their wives, one of them exclaimed, with a sigh, "Well may I bewail my loss, for I had so few differences with the dear deceased, that the last day of my marriage was as happy as the first." "There I surpass you," said his friend, "for the last day of mine was happier." *

As we began our desultory chapter on *Wedded Life*, with *Home*, so would we end it with *Affection*. That which is worthy of the name is not an unreasoning, blind passion, awakened by a fair face or form, or attracted by showy accomplishments. It is something deeper and holier in its character — that moral magnetism which attracts soul to soul, irrespective, to a great extent, of mere physical beauty or deformity. That, is indeed, a poor bond of affec-

* Tin Trumpet.

tion, which would seek to unite hearts and hands together, by the blandishments of beauty merely, without the deep faith of the heart, since the caprice of fancy or the ravages of time might soon destroy its power.

**" 'Tis beauty, that doth oft make women proud ;
'Tis virtue, that doth make them most admired ;
'Tis modesty, that makes them seem 'divine."**



IV.

MODERN IMPEDIMENTS TO MARRIAGE.

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MODERN IMPEDIMENTS TO MARRIAGE.

S Love less potent to attract hearts and hands together, now-a-days, than heretofore, — or are hearts and hands otherwise so pre-occupied, that they successfully resist its hitherto overmastering sway? Has the tender and gentle nature of woman, or the loyalty and heroism of man, become stultified and dead to all generous emotion? Time was, when, by deeds of lofty enterprise and high renown, love-making was held in high esteem — was a pursuit that commanded the popular respect. In the romantic age of chivalry, “love ruled the court, the camp,

the grove," — prince and peasant were alike the willing subjects of its sway. Those brilliant times of knight-errantry, with the chivalric sentiments they inspired, have passed away, but has the spirit of loyalty and devotion to woman also passed away from us? Nay, — Love still holds supremacy over human hearts, — with less of pageantry and state, it may be, yet with a reality of dominion as absolute and as beneficent as ever it did in days of yore.

In our transition from that poetic age to the present practical one, our modern civilization has engendered in us, indeed, a life too prosaic and literal; and it needs an infusion of the poetic sentiment, to counteract this tendency of the worldly, material and epicurean spirit of our own. Nor is this all; we need also a more exact and just appreciation of the great meaning and object of life, — its true significancy and worth. The gift of life implies responsibilities, as well as pleasure and profit; and without a religious sense of its accountability, a true knowledge of its highest import and claims cannot be attained. The conjugal relation — almost

coeval with the gift of life itself — is one of the most important of its responsible conditions ; so that the history of life is the history of marriage — its conservator through all times and climes. “ With marriage, man undertakes those duties of existence which he is born to fulfil. He can never become the perfect man unless married, — woman being the complement of his being. The excitements of life and of business, — the selfishness of daily existence, diminish, the generousities of the heart expand, the health of the mind becomes daily more robust, small repressions of selfishness, daily concessions and daily trials, — render him better ; the woman of his choice becomes his equal, and, in lifting her, he lifts himself.” He may not be a genius, nor she very clever ; but once truly married, the real education of life begins.

That is not education which varnishes a man or woman over with the pleasant and shining accomplishments which fit us for “ society,” but that which tends to improve the heart, to bring forward the reflective qualities ; and to form a firm and regular character ; that which cultivates

the reason, subdues the passions, restrains them in their proper place, trains us to self-denial, makes us able to bear trials, and to refer them, and all our sentiments and feelings, to their proper source; which makes us look beyond this world into the next.

Allan Ramsay, in his fine pastoral — “The Gentle Shepherd,” finds a beautiful illustration of marriage in two aged elms, growing side by side. He supposes them to have been, “some years since,” as bridegroom and bride. Each year they have pressed nearer and nearer to each other, until their spreading branches have mingled; and, as he sings, in old Scottish phrase,

“This shields the other fra the eastlin blast,
That in return defends it fra the west.”

Had they stood apart and alone, each must have borne the violence of every wind, and bowed unsheltered before every storm.

Asbury, the principal founder of the Methodist Church in America, when nearly sixty years

old, gave the following reason for remaining unmarried, — against his will: “ At twenty-six years of age I came to America; it had been my intention to return to Europe when I should be thirty, but the war prevailed, and continued for ten years. This was no time to marry; at thirty-nine I was ordained superintendent-bishop in the United States, — an office requiring constant travel, and I could hardly expect to find a woman with grace to induce her willingly to live but one week out of fifty-two with her husband. * * I may add to this, that I had little money, and with this I administered to the necessities of a beloved mother, till I was fifty-seven. If I have done wrong, I hope God, and the sex, will forgive me.”

A modern English essayist insists that, “ The first business in a man’s life is to fall in love. It is a man’s first duty, and he would be wise, if he undertook it right early in life, when he was wide awake to woman’s faults, when he had ceased to look upon woman as a divinity, and began to regard her as a loving and lovable human creature — a being neither faultless

nor too full of faults, but one whom it is his duty to love and caress, to guide and chide when she required such guidance and correction, but in a way which should exhibit on his part both art and heart. * * *

“ Love is a great science, too hard to master when one grows old, and it is not to be despised nor flouted, and indeed only to be dealt with like Greek, French pronunciation, Latin verse, and a few other things, by a very early acquaintance. ‘ The science of love,’ wrote Cicero, ‘ is the philosophy of the heart.’ So, moreover, the method of falling in love truly, wisely, properly, and with discretion, is the science of life. What a paradise would this world have been if it had never witnessed an ill-sorted union nor an unhappy marriage. The question needs no further argument. This falling properly in love is the first question in life. * *

“ Fall in love, then, by all means, but don’t ‘ spoon ;’ that is, if you are not next door to a fool. If you are going to choose one upon whom your own happiness, your children’s health, your own goodness, and it may be the

happiness of your soul depends, for the sake of all that in this light age you hold sacred, don't 'spoon.' Words are things, and really mean more; yea, all are more true than they seem. Some people *do* spoon." *

Sallies of wit and sarcasm are commonly pointed at such persons; and they deserve all they get, since they provoke the sport.

Love has been compared to debt: it keeps its victim awake at night, or disturbs his repose with nocturnal visions; and, during day, haunts him with perpetual phantoms. Love has been appropriately named the tender passion, from its softening effects on the brain; some authorities, however, suppose it is so designated, because its influence is derived from the softer sex. The disease is highly infectious, — it attacks all classes alike, old and young, the poor as well as the wealthy; for Cupid is ever on the alert, seeking whom he may ensnare.

It is to be feared that marriage is not revered in our day, as it should be — as a sacred

* Author of "Gentle Life."

institution; it is not regarded as the beautiful expression of life enriched by mutual love. The sentiment of conjugal life is instinct with deep meaning; it represents the chaste affections acting in their legitimate and appointed sphere — conjugal, maternal, and filial. Marriage is the vase holding the elixir of life. “The worship of the Penates signified its holiness. We tell of the sacred hearthstone which was the Hestia of the ancient Greeks; we speak of the ‘family’ altar to this day, implying it to be religious in its character. Until the estate of marriage is approached by purer motives than those of mere expediency, or pecuniary considerations, it will not be likely to re-assert its beneficent power, as the palladium of all social virtue and happiness. True reform will begin, not by ignoring the family relation, but by elevating it. By educating woman to a better sense of what is due to herself, and, through her, to the world. Here is where all reform must begin.” *

* United States Magazine.

Perhaps, next to the models of domestic life presented to us in the sacred Scriptures, are those beautiful illustrations to which we have already referred, given in the lives of many worthy and noble women of the seventeenth century, in England, and the early times of our own Republic. Since those days of honest simplicity and modest content, many strange heresies have crept in unawares, upon our household creed and conduct. "Utopian philosophy may indulge in reveries about a state of society in which men shall forego the delights of a well-regulated family circle, and thus escape its responsibilities and difficulties; maudlin sentimentalists may weep over the miseries produced by foolish and wicked marriages; or by the treachery of some who have violated their marriage vows, and then, in defiance of reason, jump to the conclusion that all marriages are wrong; but all who fear God, and take the holy Scriptures for their guide, will be of a different mind." *

* Bailey on Marriage.

— After all the banter and badinage of which it has been the subject, there is little fear that the torch of Hymen will ever be extinguished ; the instincts of the ruling passion will continue to prevail ; and it is well for the social economy that they do thus triumph. Take from the human heart the passion of love, and what is there left ? Life would then not be worth having ; youth would have nothing to enjoy, and age nothing to remember with delight.

Sterne affirms, that he never felt the vibrations of his heart so much in unison with virtue, as when he was in love ; and that whenever he did a mean or unworthy action, on examining strictly, he found himself then without any sympathetic attachment to the gentler sex. The young are always enthusiastic on the subject, and entertain the most exalted ideas of the estate connubial. You may suggest to them that there are thorns as well as roses growing upon its banks and borders, and that its skies are not always bright, but your suggestion will be little heeded, for marriage is their bright ideal — their goal. —

And the aged, who have experienced its pleasures and its trials, are no less ready to bear their testimony in its behalf, as the greatest of all compensations, for the inevitable cares, troubles and hardships which we have to encounter in the "battle of life." Said the shrewd Sydney Smith, — and he had, at least, an average chance of speaking from actual observation and experience: "The haunts of happiness are varied, and rather unaccountable; but I have more often seen her among little children, home firesides, and country houses than anywhere else."

Woman's influence is the sheet-anchor of society; and this influence is due, not exclusively to the fascinations of her charms, but chiefly to the strength, uniformity and consistency of her virtues, — maintained under many sacrifices, with fortitude and heroism. And this is justly due to her praise, that the credit of her acknowledged ascendancy is preserved amidst the degeneracy of men.

"The world must go on its own way, however; for all we can say against it, radiant

beauty, though it beams over the organization of a doll, will have its hour of empire; the most torpid heiress will easily get herself married; but the wife whose sweet nature can kindle worthy delights, is she who brings to her hearth a joyous, ardent and hopeful spirit, and that subtle power whose sources we can hardly trace, but which yet so irradiates a home that all who come near are filled and inspired by the deep sense of womanly presence. We best learn the unsuspected might of a being like this, when we try the weight of that sadness that hangs like lead upon the room, the gallery, the stairs, where once her footstep sounded and now is heard no more. It is not less the energy than the grace and gentleness of this character that works the enchantment." *

Among the modern impediments to marriage, not the least influential is the inordinate passion for gay attire, so prevalent in our day. It has been well denominated a paltry pride, — to be made up a mere thing of dress and display, —

* Quarterly Review.

blazing out in vulgar excess of astounding millinery devices of rustling silks, point lace, and the endless et cetera of finery, that seem but a frail disguise for true grace and beauty. We have surrendered the neatness and elegant simplicity of our predecessors for the gaudy and flaunting trappings of a theatrical masque or show, — making life seem more like a phantasmagoria, and the actors in it decked in the gaud of stage attire. Common sense might possibly suggest the correction of the extravagances and absurdities which obtain among the votaries of fashion, and their imitators ; but common sense seems to have forsaken the good cause. In the circles of fashion, indeed, her precepts are unheeded, and her very existence ignored. According to the modern code of fashion the true ornaments of maiden modesty, gentleness and grace, are ruled out, and the new law of “society” is, to substitute for these old style attractions, the rivalry of richest silks and satins, with a liberal accompaniment of emblazoned jewelry and gaudy display. But, perchance, some gay belle of the season may

be disposed to denounce our protest as antiquated prejudice, and insist that, to be charming, women should be vain and frivolous, and artistically costumed, demonstrative and bold in manners, with a little infusion of sickly sentimentalism, and that then they become perfectly irresistible.

She may think that the surest way to effect a conquest is, by the flaunting airs and demonstrative boldness which characterize some of the sex of our day. If they are right, our instincts, as well as all traditions of the past, must, of course, be wrong; and our social economy and creed would demand a radical reconstruction. Before we consent to such a revolutionary scheme, however, it would be well to ascertain whether it would be either right or expedient. The fickle goddess Fashion, who rules with more than imperial despotism, in the affairs of conduct as well as costume, has, in these degenerate days, issued her laws and decrees concerning that most sacred of all human alliances — marriage, which involve questions of grave moral interest. By fashion's false teaching, it

has become a mere expedient for acquiring wealth and social position; often linking together two wretched beings, totally dissonant in taste, sentiment and feeling, dooming them to a perpetual companionship of misery. Nor is fashion always a just criterion of true taste in costume; on the contrary, she is often found imposing her edicts in direct opposition to admitted standards of what is appropriate and elegant. In customs, as well as costumes, this inconsistency is no less apparent. There is as much need now of sumptuary laws for the one, and penalties for the other, as ever there was in the Elizabethan age. The euphuism of her fastidious court etiquette was not more absurd than the mannerism which has since been often as arbitrarily prescribed by the so-called *beau monde*; nor the hoops and coiffure of the days of Addison more grotesque than are similar monstrosities of our own times.

These freaks and follies of fashion's votaries are harmless, however, when compared with those which pertain to the morals of our social life. It is to be admitted that husbands

and fathers have a fondness for dressing their wives and daughters in gay and costly attire, and, to a reasonable extent, this is not only permissible, but proper; and the fair objects of this idolatry do not refuse to accept the flattering folly at their hands. But when the passion for dress obtains the mastery over reason and common sense, — when, for the frivolities of fashion, its devotees starve their minds, that they may bedeck their bodies, — then it becomes more than a venial offence. And although this love of extravagant display is not to be charged against women any more than it is against men, yet the latter, would, doubtless, soon yield to the force of a better example, were the women to institute it. As it is, however, both are equally culpable, — for while the one party love costly apparel and luxuriously appointed establishments, the latter are no less ambitious of fast horses, great houses and costly clubs where they while away their time and dissipate their money with no less lavish indifference. This rivalry in extravagant display, this inordinate desire for sumptuous attire, are

alike pernicious in their influence upon character ; in the one it leads to an enervating course of dissipation, and in the other to indolence and its sure concomitant—*ennui*. Its influence upon marriage is no less pernicious ; since, according to the modern creed, a woman may have neither head nor heart, but with a fine skin, a handsome figure, and large landed property, she possesses the combined attractions of eligibility and power.

The sad fate of Marie Antoinette is an illustration of the baneful influence of selfishness and love of worldly display. Few women were more polished and refined, or more bewitchingly beautiful, yet in spite of all these attractions, so wanting was she in moral influence, that she became the victim of blood-thirsty men, who ruled in the “Reign of Terror.” “One would have thought that ten thousand swords would have leaped from their scabbards for her defence,” said Edmund Burke ; “yet she was led away to a violent death.”

Costume is not only an index to character, it also exerts a reflex influence upon it ; so that,

as a general rule, it is safe to infer, to some extent, at least, the moral attributes and deportment of a person by the style of his or her attire. A writer in the *Saturday Review* remarks : —

“ It is not to be denied that many women with husbands possessed of that most unsatisfactory of worldly blessings, a limited income, with the view of hiding the fact from the world, pursue the ever varying *mode* a trifle too earnestly, following each new fashion not because it suits them better than the old, but simply because it is known to involve an expense which they cannot afford. We say nothing in their defence ; but where a woman’s object is solely to beautify herself, who shall condemn her for dressing her very best? When she is young she hopes to add to her charms by varying her attire ; when she is no longer young it is very hard for her, for then she has to strive after something which flies from her without checking the ardor of her pursuit. Just as invalids known to be afflicted with some incurable disease seek for amelioration in change, confiding

themselves to the care of all physicians, trying all remedies one after the other, seeking relief in all climates, vainly seeking to check the progress of a disease, the fatal result of which is known to be inevitable; so do women, who are no longer young, adopt with eagerness every kind of attire which they hope will charm away that melancholy spectre which throws its shadow on their toilette-glass — old age.”

Swift was right when he affirmed, that “the reason why so few marriages are happy is, because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages.” Thus too many who study the witchery of attraction before marriage, afterwards lose or neglect the magic art of pleasing. Self-will, self-love and indolence take the place of self-surrender and self-sacrifice, and the master-charm of wedded life is gone.

“If she will, she will, — you may depend on’t,
And if she won’t, she won’t — and there’s an end on’t.”

Queen Katherine of Arragon said that prodigality in dressing-time, is murdered time.

Anne Boleyn, on the contrary, was as long at her mirror as any modern maiden; and when arrayed for conquest, perhaps no woman was ever more decidedly "armed against the peace of mankind."

Ruskin remarks "Whether we can ever return to any of those more perfect types of form is questionable; but there can be no question that all the money we spend on the forms of dress at present worn, is, so far as any good purpose is concerned, wholly lost. Mind, in saying this, I reckon among good purposes, the purpose which young ladies are said sometimes to entertain — of being married; but they would be married quite as soon (and probably to wiser and better husbands) by dressing quietly, as by dressing brilliantly; and I believe it would only be needed to lay fairly and largely before them the real good which might be effected by the sums they spend in toilettes, to make them trust at once only to their bright eyes and braided hair, for all the mischief they have a mind to."

It is not, as is often supposed, — that wise men select women for wives, amid the gaud and

glitter of the gay saloon, or at the theatre; but in quiet homes, where the domestic graces prevail. These are the potent charms which most surely attract the high as well as the humble; against these, all the finery and airs in the world, sink into insignificance. It was under some such circumstances that three daughters of a worthy commoner of England, of the last century, married into the highest ranks of the Peerage; and it is but justice to them to add, that they reflected honor on their rank, rather than derived any from it. Cobbett, who was remarkable for his strong common sense, chose his *cara sposa* at the "wash-tub" — there was certainly no romance in that.

Most women have a tendency to the romantic; this is not without its charm, since without some degree of it they would lose much of that attraction which neutralizes the common-places of our every-day life. It is the poetry of sentiment which elevates and beautifies life, but the excess of its indulgence unfits its subject for the stern realities with which she has to do. The young are peculiarly liable to enthusiasm;

they are more addicted to reverie and dreams of the imagination, and therefore should be the more observant of the folly of supposing that the obligations of life are to be learned from the highly colored pages of a romance. Morbid sentimentalism is the prolific source of many infelicitous marriages; while common sense and energy of character are safe guarantees of the opposite. While they are to be pitied who live in a realm of ideal dreams, those are no less in error, who possess no sensibilities for the beautiful and the picturesque, — who are utterly devoid of all poetic feeling; for life has its romance and its æsthetic charms. “Is there any sentiment so sweet as that which unites those who virtuously and truly love, — which identifies their hopes, their joys, their prospects, — which inspires the weaker with affiance, the stronger with sympathy — which becomes more pure, more disinterested, more intense, the longer it is experienced, — and which, looking beyond the narrow span of this earthly existence, longs for its renewal in a brighter world? And is there anything which can

compensate for the want of such a sentiment in woman?" *

Leigh Hunt has well said, — “the most fascinating women are those who can most enrich the every-day moment of existence. In a particular and attaching sense, they are those who can partake our pleasures and our pains in the liveliest and most devoted manner. Beauty is little without this; with it she is indeed triumphant. Beauty too often sacrifices to fashion; the spirit of fashion is not the beautiful, but the wilful, — often not the graceful but the fantastic, — not the superior in the abstract, but the superior in the worst of all concretes — the vulgar. The high point of taste and elegance is to be sought for, not in the fashionable circles, but in the best bred, and such as can dispense with the eternal necessity of never being the same thing.”

Beauty — wondrous as is its gift — does not, alone, always command marriage, as well as homage; nor does homeliness always prove

* Mrs. Sanford on Woman.

an obstacle to its attainment. Indeed, it will be found that, usually, they who are denied the possession of physical charms, have other compensatory moral attractions and qualities, which are even more potent in their influence. Men have generally the wit to judge which are the more profitable and enduring — mental or physical claims, — and they act accordingly. A good wife, if she be plain, will not, moreover, be likely to provoke her husband to jealousy; whereas if he had been endowed with a vain and beautiful flirt, the case might have been very different. Plainness or loveliness of itself, however, offers no certain guarantee for marriage, and especially in this mammon-worshipping age, — when fashionable folk cease to marry for love, and only form “matrimonial alliances,” — the probabilities are, that a very large portion of the sex will have but a slender and doubtful chance of marriage at all. Money, not matrimony is the thing sought for, and marriage is looked upon as a mere matter of merchandise — a mercantile transaction. So common, indeed, is this estimate of marriage

becoming, that we should not be surprised if we see the hymeneal market-lists chronicled in the newspapers, with the prices-current of the stock-exchange. Thus is happiness bartered away for mere worldly display, and the very citadel of civilization and virtue surrendered to its foes, and all its treasures laid waste.

“Maidens of England! bought and sold!
For the price of place, and the price of gold,—
While the heavens look on and wonder!
Think of the barren and wasted lives,—
The ill-matched minds of men and wives,
Man may not put asunder!”

Parents who force their daughters into interested alliances are more guilty than the Ammonites, who sacrificed their children to Moloch,—in the one case a speedy death was the result, and in the other, years of torture, often more terrible to endure. Mammon has more votaries in the present age, than the great goddess Diana of the Ephesians had in days of yore. “It would seem that men and women are beginning to believe the fable that wealth is the father of

love — that matrimony is a matter of money — and that Cupid, having grown old, has changed his name to cupidity.” We, living in the light of the Christian ages, are rebuked even by the twilight of heathendom. Solon, as we learn from Plutarch, abolished the giving of portions with young women in marriage, lest matrimony should resolve itself a mere matter of pecuniary interest. When the Athenian general, Themistocles, was asked what he thought of marrying a person without a fortune, he replied, that “he would rather marry his daughter to a man without an estate, than to an estate without a man.” Too often, alas! the satire of the poet is exemplified :

“Maidens, like moths, are ever caught with glare,
And mammon wins his way, where seraphs might despair.”

Mrs. Child, turns “states-evidence” on this subject, and says, “I never knew a marriage expressly for money, that did not end unhappily. Yet managing mothers and heartless daughters are constantly playing the same unlucky game.

I believe that men more frequently than women marry for love, because women think they will never have a better chance, and dread being dependent. If I may judge by my observation in such matters, marrying for a home is a most tiresome way of getting a living."

If there are characters so anomalous as fast young ladies, who sneer at religion, eschew the petticoat, hate little children, pant for legislative honors, and look on fond mothers and faithful wives with horror, as creatures unsuited for this progressive age; — we commend to them the following piquant passage from the pen of Charles Dickens: —

— "The true woman, for whose ambition a husband's love and her children's adoration are sufficient, who applies her military instincts to the discipline of her household, and whose legislative abilities exercise themselves in making laws for her house; whose intellect has field enough for her in communion with her husband, and whose heart asks no other honors than his love and admiration; a woman who does not think it a weakness to attend to her toilet, and

who does not disdain to be beautiful ; who believes in the virtue of glossy hair and well-fitting gowns, and who eschews rents and raveled edges, slip-shod shoes, and audacious make-ups ; a woman who speaks low, and does not speak much ; who is patient and gentle, intellectual, and industrious ; who loves more than she reasons, and yet does not love blindly ; who never scolds and rarely argues, but adjusts with a smile ; such a woman is the wife we have all dreamed of once in our lives, and is the mother we still worship in the backward distance of the past.”—

Every young woman must be conscious that the position she is to occupy in society mainly depends upon herself. Whatever be the sphere in which she moves — among the lowly, or those deemed the high, — there is a sense in which she is the architect of her own fortune. The mere idler, or vain devotee of fashion — whose thoughts are wholly engrossed with its glitter and empty show, must become a dwarf in intellect, and destitute of those ennobling virtues that reflect the true glory of woman.

Not many, we suspect, among our modern heiresses would resort to the expedient of a lady of Limerick, for obtaining a true husband, rather than a mere fortune-hunter. In order to test the fidelity of her professed devotees, the young lady caused a report to be circulated among them that her supposed fortune belonged to another person of a similar name. This intelligence soon had the effect of lessening the visits of the lovers, so that, ultimately, but one only remained constant in his suit. When she found that it was her hand he sought, and not her fortune, she at once made him the happy recipient of both. We find some good, old-fashioned counsel, which, coming from the pen of a cultivated woman, can scarcely fail to claim attention.

“It will be a great day for this or any country, when the young women are taught that marriage is desirable, not because it will secure to them an unlimited supply of rich dresses and jewels, but because it will make them better women, — develop their higher nature, take away their selfishness, worldliness and

frivolity, — and, through the cares and sufferings of maternity, carry them to the very gates of heaven. But this glad experience — this perfect fruition, is not for those who refuse to bear the cross of care and pain.

— “The ministry of home is always blessed, but in sorrow it is doubly so; and this ministry, more effectual than sermons, lies in the hands of women. Do they ever think how high and sacred a responsibility it is? All women should have homes and children, and should be taught that therein is their life-work. * * A woman is not a woman until she has been baptized in her love and devotion to home and children. Very humanizing, very sacred is the presence of a little child.”* —

The creed of a certain class of young ladies, — judging from their Amazonian boldness, may be thus stated; it is essential to obey implicitly the mandates of Fashion, however much they may seem to conflict with the decisions of common sense and correct taste; all sentiment must be at once both hurtful and ridiculous when it leads to anything like real feeling, — therefore

* “Talks on Women’s Topics.”

it is better to pretend to have sentiment, rather than have any : in marriage, consult first, the world's estimation, and next, your own convenience ; the man with whom you propose to be united, should be looked upon merely as an artist regards the accessory of a picture !

It is well, however, that this Amazonian class do not represent the sex of our day ; they are, happily, the exception to the rule. Social benefits of the highest order are derivable from intercourse with refined and cultivated women ; they quicken the sensibilities, sharpen the wit, and refine the grosser elements of character ; they make us less selfish, — which is a great point to gain.

A gentleman, passing out of the Opera, in London, and observing a number of rude young men elbowing an unprotected old lady — went up to her respectfully and offered her his arm, took her down to his own carriage, which was in waiting, and walked home himself in the rain ; some years after, this same old lady left him ten thousand pounds a year, as a reward for his politeness. Polite-

ness is not always — nor often, at such a premium; but it is a noble thing to be polite — and, like virtue, is its own reward. Courtesy to woman under all circumstances, is a necessity with a noble and generous nature; nor should it ever be intermitted in all the intercourse of life. But, if courtesy be due to the gentler sex, its requital in full, is no less imperative in return.

They who insist upon the privileges of the sex, should possess the qualities of the sex: the men should be noble and generous; the women gentle and condescending. The respective privileges should be considered as forfeited to termagants and tyrants.

In former times the dame and the demoiselle were eminent for courtesy, as well as industry; but those characteristics, — which shed a halo of glory over woman, — have given place to others, alike destructive to her moral worth and personal grace. To waste, with lavish prodigality, that time in indolence and the frivolities of fashion, is to squander away our capital with which we work out the great prob-

lem of life; and this is as suicidal as criminal.

The mission of life is too serious a matter to be thus trifled with, — it must not be given over to caprice or chance. “It entails,” says a recent writer,* “many duties, and with these duties, heavy responsibilities, — trials, crosses of all kinds, which are the real essence of human existence, for amusement and pleasures are only its brilliant and deceptive surface. Human life is multiplex — it really includes three lives, each of which has its necessities, its labors and its duties. There is material life, — it is its lowest, but it must be cared for; then on a higher region, there is intellectual life, — woe to those who despise it; and rising and towering above the two others, there is spiritual life, — for man is not made for bread alone, but for eternity. No one has the right to separate and to tear asunder these three lives; for the essential unity of existence is thereby destroyed; it is the duty of every

* “Studios Women.”

one to regulate them in a holy and necessary harmony.”

The proper sphere of woman and the legitimate source of her influence on Society have been well expressed in the following extract from an American divine:* “Compare the condition and pursuits of the mass of men with those of women, and tell me on which side lies the inferiority. While the greater part of our sex are engaged in turning up the clods of earth, fashioning the materials which are to supply the physical wants of our race, exchanging the products of industry of different countries, toiling amidst the perils of war and the tumults of politics—to you is committed the nobler task of moulding the infant mind, giving character to succeeding ages,—to control the stormy passions of man, inspiring him with those sentiments which elevate and gentlize his nature, — to open to him the truest and purest sources of happiness and prompt him to the love of virtue and religion. A wife, a mother! how sacred and venerable are these names! What nobler

* Thatcher.

objects can the most aspiring ambition propose to itself than to fulfil the duties which these relations imply? Instead of murmuring that your field of influence is so narrow, should you not rather tremble at the magnitude and sacredness of your responsibility? When you demand a higher education, should it not be, not that you may be thereby enabled to rush into that sphere that nature has marked for man, but rather that you may move the more worthily and gracefully within your own?" The advocates of "Woman's Rights" speak of domestic love and that shrine of the affections — Home, as of some insipid thing for which they have no relish, and which they would madly barter in order "to do something for society," — that is, to usurp the dominion of the other sex, and seek gain or renown in the senate or the forum! As if it were doing nothing for society to be true wives and mothers, — as if, through the conjugal and maternal relation, "there went not forth an influence reaching even unto the stars!" Having given some patient study to this subject, we now present some of the

opinions upon it which we deem authoritative and deserving of attention.

The laws of nature and the instincts of the sex imperiously demand of woman to do what is feminine; those who would defy both are, therefore, untrue to themselves. It is in harmony with reason and the fitness of things, that woman's appropriate sphere of life—the domestic, should be defended against the Utopian schemes and aggressions of the faction who so fiercely contend for her "political rights," thus placing her in the attitude of a rival, instead of the companion of man.

A recent writer in the *Saturday Review*, remarks: "Time was when the stereotyped phrase, 'a fair young English girl,' meant the ideal of womanhood: a girl who could be trusted alone, if need be, because of the innate purity and dignity of her nature, but who was neither bold in bearing, nor masculine in mind; a girl, who, when she married, would be her husband's friend and companion, but never his rival; one who would consider their interests identical, and not hold him as just so much

fair game for sport ; who would make his house, his true home and place of rest, not a mere passage-place for vanity and ostentation to go through. This was in the old time, when English girls were content to be what God and nature made them. The girl of this period is a creature who dyes her hair and paints her face, as the first articles of her personal religion ; whose sole idea of life is plenty of fun and luxury ; and whose dress is the object of such thought and intellect as she possesses. Her main endeavor in this is to outvie her neighbors in the extravagance of fashion. No matter whether, as in the time of crinolines, she sacrificed decency, or as now, in the time of trains, she sacrifices cleanliness ; no matter either, whether she makes herself a nuisance and an inconvenience to every one she meets. The girl of this period has done away with such moral muffishness as consideration for others, or regard for counsel and rebuke."

This reviewer is certainly severe in his strictures upon modern English belles ; how far they apply to their sisters on this side of the water, it

is not for us to determine ; we leave that to the ladies themselves. The little word — “ obey ” — seems to stick in the throats of some of our modern belles, as “ Amen ” is said to have done in that of Lady Macbeth ; forgetting that the opposite party have to respond — “ With all my worldly goods I thee endow ! ” The marriage compact is rightly balanced, nor can its terms be improved ; and it should be remembered it is a sacred, as well as a civil engagement.

The attempt to repeal the marriage rite, as well as the mercenary spirit which prevails, and the worldliness of women, are among the modern impediments to marriage. No wonder that with such formidable ante-nuptial hindrances, many should adopt *Punch's* advice to those who wish to marry, — “ *Don't!* ” — for it is good advice. Women always have had, and always will have, the control in the matter of marriage ; as it is theirs, generally, to render it happy or otherwise ; because their influence is, as a general rule, paramount.

“ That women have their rights, and, what is unfortunately true, their wrongs, great, deep

and terrible, no fair-minded man can question. What is the attitude of society towards them? That of a friend to cheer, or of a champion to defend or to espouse their cause? "I hazard little in declaring," says the Rev. W. Milburn, "that the relation is that of a task-master and oppressor. Hundreds of places of easy employment and remunerative profit, the duties of which could be perfectly performed by women, are now usurped by men; and within the narrow boundaries allotted to women hard indeed is the work, and trifling the compensation. Stern and angry as the vengeful Nemesis appears to be the fate presiding over those women who must gain their daily bread by daily toil."

Such being the social disabilities under which women are compelled to exist in our great centres of civilization, what is the remedy to be applied for their mitigation or removal? We answer, in their educational and social training. Mental and moral culture should usurp the place of the fashionable follies, frivolities and flirtations so prevalent with our modern belles. One of the great necessities of the present day, is that

beneficent training and discipline, which not only qualifies young maidens for the discharge of the duties of married life, but imparts a rational and just estimate of the gift of life and its true aims.

“The domestic life of this country is in a fearful — not to say an appalling, condition. The greedy pursuit of wealth is an almost universal characteristic of the men; and wives and mothers are well-nigh as eager in their desire for the possession of gold as husbands and fathers. Early married life is devoted to a daring race to gain the prizes of Mammon; the middle life — aye, of womanhood, is then given up to ostentation and vulgar display, — great houses, sumptuously furnished, — costly equipages and trappings, magnificent surroundings, where the possessors are the only dwarfs, — seem to constitute for the mass of the women of America a perfect paradise, a paradise in prospect only; for when the Eden is gained, the hot breath of a simoom has withered the verdure and the flowers, dried up the fountains and slain the singing birds; — there is little or no domestic happiness

or life." If, therefore, the social condition of a community be a reflex of woman's character and culture, it is apparent that the remedy of social evils must take their rise, and derive their success from woman herself; since by infantile education she controls the destiny of the race. "The child is father of the man," — and the child's character is moulded by the mother. The nurseries of to-day contain the society and the state of the next generation; and in the child's world, woman's dignity and sway are regal. If society is purged it must be by the sanctification of home. The Rev. Mr. Milburne, who, although deprived of sight, is evidently not blind to some of the errors and imperfections of the gentle sex, says, "Let us have as provision for the education of the future wives and mothers of the Republic, a more comprehensive course of instruction; fewer 'accomplishments' as they are called — apparently in derision; and more earnest, patient study, systematic and thorough. Cultivate simplicity of life, taste and manners; renounce ostentatious display, extravagant expenditure, abjure the *outré*, monstrous styles of

dress in vogue, and dare to follow the dictates of a refined taste in apparel. Defend your children, as far as you are able, from the pestiferous passion for fine dress and glittering display, from hollow and vulgar pretension, and give examples of cheerfulness under toil, of fortitude amid trial, and of contentment united with diligence and effort; and thus become majestic in self-control and mighty for the overthrow of evil."

A recent English writer remarks:—“ Let man, who has the tougher sinews, expose himself to wind and sunshine; and let woman, whose frame is less robust, keep house and poeticise it by her presence. Thus, with unity of destiny and diversity of duties, we have man and woman in their mysterious harmony. It will be readily admitted that the young girl's vocation is to please, — the wife's to love, — the mother's, to rear and educate her child. But the only portion of the programme conscientiously executed is the first. The young girl is taught to please, — although nature has almost made the task superfluous; in fact, she has endowed

the youthful maiden, in her voice, her step, her smile, — in a word, in the rhythm of her entire person — with a ferocity of beauty, which is more terrible than the tooth or the claw of a panther, to seize on man and lay him prostrate with a look. We ought, therefore, to complete a girl's instruction, educate her, not for a single moment — the short interval before her marriage — but for all the rest of her existence. A wife ought to be considered as something different to a man's walking doll, dressed in the latest fashion, and buried under a stack of silk or satin. Woman must be allowed to occupy her mind with reasonable employment. Poor or rich, we ought all of us to work, were it only for work's sake. Work possesses, in itself, independent of all ideas of profit, a secret moralizing influence; it prevents human nature from falling into the fermentation of reverie. * * * Poetry is nothing else than a revenge which the soul takes on commonplace reality — an agreeable method of soaring to the skies on lyrical wings. After such an ascent, a woman will set little store by a bit of ribbon or a scrap of silk.

stuck on to extort a fool's compliment or to entrap an imbecile."*

What is needed, is not masculine women, nor effeminate men; — girls preparing themselves to be legislators, nor boys preparing themselves to be milliners, — but a practical recognition of the distinctive traits of each sex and their respective spheres of action. “Why should the lark covet the eagle's strength of wing? Her melodious warblings as she mounts into the clear sky, wins for her a more sincere admiration than would the attempt to imitate the proud bearing with which he confronts the fiercest rays of the sun. The very expressions, therefore, which are used, like cabalistic words, to call up shapes of accusation and discontent for imagined wrongs, when rightly understood, teach us to complete rather than reconstruct the social edifice to the inheritance of which we were born; and confirm us in the belief that woman's proper position can never give her any other influence than that which, in its most direct action and

* “London Society.”

largest extent, shall leave her in the possession of the delicacy and sensibility which belong to her sex.”*

“ Man loses the only authority that can effectually tame him, when woman loses the delicacy of mind and costume that marks her as his counterpart, and not his rival. The masculine school of “ Woman’s Rights ” reformers have hurt the sex whom they profess to befriend, by disparaging the trials most characteristic of their nature, and giving them a certain boldness and hardness that fail of being manly, and are ashamed of being womanly. * * It will be a day worth noting in the calendar, when woman emancipates herself from the yoke of vulgar fashion, and when good taste and true beauty, — not the scale of mere expensiveness and rarity, preside over her wardrobe and drawing-room. * * The great folly of our day is that of trying to seem what we are not; thus destroying the reality of peace, to keep up the appearance of pride.”† In England there may

* Rev. Osgood.

† C. Pinckney.

be less of this false ambition : people in the middle ranks of society there, are disposed to live according to their means, and are content to marry upon moderate estimates and resources. Marriages in our own country are on the decrease in consequence of the extravagant demands of social ambition. ‘ Certainly, the great tragedy of American life is writing itself now in the fortunes (or misfortunes) of the hosts of women dependent upon precarious means for support. This desire, so universal, of appearing well-dressed causes the downfall of the greater number who lapse from virtue.’

“ All good men feel, of course, that any distinctive separation of the sexes, — all those separate gatherings and marks which would divide woman from man, and set her upon a separate pedestal, are as foolish as they are really impracticable. You will find no one who believes less in what certain philanthropists call the emancipation of women, than a happy mother and wife. She does not want to be emancipated ; and she is quite unwilling that, instead of being the friend and ally of man, she should

be his opponent. She feels truly that the woman's cause is man's.

‘ For woman is not undeveloped man,
But diverse. Could we make her as the man,
Sweet love were slain whose dearest bond is this —
Not like to like, but like in difference.’

“ The very virtues of woman, not less than her faults, fit her for her attachment to man. There is no man so bad as not to find some pitying woman who will admire and love him; and no man so wise but that he shall find some woman equal to the full comprehension of him, ready to understand him, and to strengthen him.

“ With such a woman he will grow more tender, ductile and appreciative; the man will be more of woman, she of man.”*

Whether the minds of women are equal to those of men has been often discussed; some, from gallantry, assert that they are, while others, no less loyal, are of an opposite opinion. A writer in the Edinburgh Review says: “ The prev-

* “ Gentle life.”

alent opinion certainly is that women are inferior in intellect, but doubts whether sufficient data exists for any safe or confident decision ; “ for the position of women in society has never yet been — perhaps never can be — such as to give fair play to their capabilities. No women have yet attained to the highest eminence in the highest departments of intellect. They have had no Shakspeare, no Newton, no Bacon, no Milton, no Raphael, no Mozart, no Watt, no Burke. Mentally as well as bodily there seem to be organic differences. * * The grand function of woman, it must always be recollected, is, and ever must be, maternity ; and this we regard not only as her distinctive characteristic, and most enduring charm, but as a high and holy office — the prolific source of not only the best affections and virtues of which our nature is capable, but also of the wisest thoughtfulness, and the most useful habits of observation, by which that nature can be elevated and adorned. But with all this, we think it impossible to deny, that it must essentially interfere with that steady and unbroken application, with-

out which no proud eminence in science can be gained — and with the discharge of all official or professional functions that do not admit of long or frequent postponement.

“ All women are intended by nature to be mothers ; and by far the greater number — not less we suppose, than nine-tenths — are called upon to act in that sacred character ; and consequently, for twenty of the best years of their lives, women are mainly occupied by the cares, the duties, the enjoyments and the sufferings of maternity.

“ How could such occupations consort with the intense and unremitting studies which seared the eyeballs of Milton, and for a time unsettled even the powerful brain of Newton ? The life of a woman is otherwise devoted ; and, of course, she has but slender chances of carrying off these great prizes.

“ It is the same with the high functions of statesmanship, legislation, generalship, and other elevated stations and pursuits, to which some women, we believe, have recently asserted the equal pretensions of their sex. * * Too

much stress, has, we think, been laid on man's superiority in physical strength — as if that, in itself, were sufficient to account for the differences in intellectual power; but it should be remembered that it is precisely in that art which demands least employment of physical force, namely — music, that the apparent inferiority of women is the most marked and unaccountable. Indeed, music is by far the most embarrassing topic to which those who maintain the mental equality of the sexes can address themselves. It is an art that is cultivated by all women who have the least aptitude for it; and in which, as far as mere taste and execution are concerned, many more women than men are found to excel. But as composers, they have never attained any distinction.

“ It is in literature, however, that women have most distinguished themselves; and probably because hundreds have cultivated literature for one that has cultivated science and art.

“ *Madame de Staël* was certainly as powerful a writer as any man of her age or country; and, not to mention other names, surely no

man has surpassed Miss Austin as a delineator of common life."

It is curious, and worthy of a passing remark, that women have achieved success in every department of fiction but that of humor; compare Miss Edgeworth with Dickens or Thackeray. It is evident, therefore, that not only by the physical, but also by the mental, law of her nature, woman was never designed to be the competitor of man.

"All history assures us, that, with the growth of society, the peculiar features of each sex have become not less, but more, distinct. Woman may persuade, advise, judge; but she should not command. By rivalry in the selfish pursuits of life, mutual affection between the sexes would be corrupted at its source. There is a visible tendency towards the removal of women, wherever it is possible, from all industrial occupations. Thus their life, instead of becoming independent of the Family, is becoming more concentrated in it. That man should provide for woman, is a law of the human race, — a law

connected with the essentially domestic character of female life.”*

Those who would seek to subvert the natural order of the social economy, would destroy its very existence. “As to the charge of exclusion, I think it would be quite as correct to say that women have combined to exclude men from the kitchen, the laundry, the nursery, as that men have combined to exclude women from the army, or the navy, or the bar, or the pulpit, or the brokers’ board. A sense of fitness, of natural affinity, determined each in its several way. Nor would any discontent with the present arrangement have arisen, had the family life kept pace with the growth of society.”†

A recent writer in “London Society,” says — “We have no sympathy with what is called the ‘Emancipation of woman,’ by certain revolutionary dames, — that modern female insurrection which would confound the petticoat with the pantaloons, sharing between them the right

* A Comte.

† Dr. Hedge.

to legislate, to administer justice, to go a-soldiering, and heaven knows what else beside. It is precisely the diversities of men and women which constitute the attraction they have for each other, and the pleasure they experience in each other's society. Change the woman into the man, and you murder love, there remains nothing but friendship, and you have destroyed the romance of life."

One of the New York newspapers thus facetiously treats the subject of a woman's improved domestic education: "French is to yield to fritters; poetry to pies and puddings; the most studious will excel in stews; the professors of music will play upon pots and pans, and the female president will rule the roast: the students are to be taught to be women, not ladies." There is something in this irony worth noticing - young ladies of the present day are generally as imperfectly educated for the duties of home-life, as for any of the other spheres of active life, which may be open for their acceptance; their great want, therefore, is a proper equipment for either or both.

The very nature and instinct of woman incline her to the private and domestic, rather than the public walks of life : to oppose this tendency of her nature would be both absurd and useless. If the right to vote were to be assigned her, what personal or social benefit would the elective franchise confer upon her? Does the exercise of the right, in any respect, affect the social or pecuniary interests of the average of those among men who possess the privilege? Does it make them more successful merchants, or more exemplary husbands? Much less may it be expected that it would confer any immunity upon women ; or redress or lessen the social evils of which they complain. The true remedy for these is to be sought elsewhere, — in an improved educational system, and in no other.

If women would refine and elevate men, they must necessarily be true to their own instincts and to their own high qualities and obligations. Such as are women, such will men be ; it is the law of equilibrium. One half of humanity cannot sink without the other half's sinking too. Men will lose their manliness when women lose

their womanliness. It is not at the ballot-box woman can exert her conservative and improving influence upon society; but in her own proper sphere, — Home. Those who think otherwise seem to forget that woman not only shared in the Fall of man, but was the first cause of it. Woman's influence is felt no less potently in the reduction of social and moral evils, through the organization of churches, schools and kindred institutions of benevolence and virtue. Mrs. Sigourney meets this question in a true woman's spirit: "Are not our rights sufficiently comprehensive?" she asks. "The sanctuary of Home — the throne of the heart — the moulding of the whole mass of mind in its first formation? Have we not power enough in all the realms of sorrow and of suffering — over all forms of want and ignorance — amid all ministries of love, from the cradle-dream to the sealing of the sepulchre?"

It is the common, though unexpressed assumption, that unmarried women and unprotected females constitute the sex; and that, to meet their wants, they have a right to demand

that the management of society shall be upset and remodelled. The real difficulty is, as to the influence to be brought to bear upon young women whose destiny in life is as yet undecided, — of whom none can tell whether they are to encounter those perils of matrimony over which decadent virgins sigh so affectingly, or are to enjoy what has been indulgently or ironically called, the state of single-blessedness. Are women to be brought up to be wives, or unmarried, independent women; or can an education be devised which will adapt them equally well to be either?

A French writer * has well remarked that the education of women is more important than that of men, since that of men is always their work. It is one thing to grace a woman with all the blandishments of a polite education, but it is quite a different thing to seek the cultivation of the moral virtues; the one is merely extrinsic — for ornament, the other, of intrinsic value, is an imperishable inheritance.

* Aimé Martin.

“What, then, is the true object of female education? Is it not a training for future duties? And since marriage is the usual destiny of woman, it is not enough to urge that she is an excellent linguist, or pianist, that her intellectual qualifications are of the highest development, — there are grander elements of character that need to be cultivated — those moral virtues which invest woman with her truest attraction and glory.”

One good result of the Woman's Rights' movement, — but not that intended by its advocates, is the new interest it has awakened for the improvement of female education. In England and France, as well as in our own country, this subject is beginning to claim the attention it deserves; and female colleges and institutions of learning of a higher order have already been established.

A writer in one of our literary journals, * institutes a comparison of the girl of thirty years ago, with the girl of to-day. The portraiture

* The Nation.

are placed in juxtaposition, and present points of character strikingly in contrast with each other.

Speaking of the woman of thirty years ago, the writer says: "Her home-haunting habits and lack of acquaintance with social splendors made her willing to devote herself to husband and children. She had almost no ambitions separate from the interests of her household, and she never thought of dressing for any man but her husband. * * If she had little faculty for dazzling a multitude, she was the more likely to exist solely for one. Her very incompleteness as a member of "Society" made her more essentially a member of the family."—The reviewer continues, — "our average woman is a clothes-worshipper: and what is bad, she worships without taste, believing that her raiment is handsomer than herself; and what is worse, she worships without prudence, not measuring outgoes by incomes. This last is her greatest fault, and we will not allow that it is a little one. * * There are consequences to this extravagance of parade, which concern

not only us, but our children. "I can't afford a wife!" is the cry of hundreds of thousands of our youth. For the mitigation of this great social evil, the writer referred to recommends two remedies, — the dowry and woman's labor.

* * If the American girl were called upon to meet a proportion of her expense by her own labor, she would be publicly a greater blessing, and personally healthier, wiser and happier."

The rule at the present day seems to be, for the one party to earn, and the other to spend. Hannah More's remarks are to the point:

"If, indeed, woman were mere outside, form and face only, and if mind made up no part of her composition, it would follow that a ballroom was quite as appropriate a place for choosing a wife as an exhibition room for choosing a picture. But, inasmuch as women are not mere portraits, their value not being determinable by a glance of the eye, it follows that a different mode of appreciating their value, and a different place for viewing them antecedent to their being individually selected, is desirable. The two

cases differ also in this, that if a man select a picture for himself from among all its exhibited competitors, and bring it to his own house, the picture being passive, he is able to fix it there; while the wife, picked up at a public place, and accustomed to incessant display, will not, it is probable, when brought home, stick so quietly to the spot where he fixes her, but will escape to the exhibition room again, just as if she were not become private property and had never been definitely disposed of."

Some little time since, there was a club of young bachelors at Marseilles, who made a vow that they would not marry, until the young women of that town abandoned their extravagant ideas of life, and their inordinate love of dress was modified by common sense. This decision, if not publicly avowed by many others not far from home, is, nevertheless, tacitly acted upon.

As regards the *fact* of the decline of marriage in England there can be no doubt. It is asserted by leading journals, medical and other, and corroborated by full and trustworthy stat-

istics. The agitation for Woman's Rights has brought this decline about. Marriage, like all other human institutions, is an affair of *quid pro quo*. The rule has been that woman should give love, comfort, obedience; and that man should give love, protection, support. Now, a leading principle of Woman's Rights, as we understand the doctrine, is to do away with some of the terms of this exchange. The young English women of to-day are far more fast, more masculine, more self-asserting — in a word, more independent than were their mothers, or than intending husbands like to see and tolerate.

Some excellent remarks on this subject were presented in an article of one of our New York newspapers,* in which the writer says, —

“ Most of those who practise celibacy on the pretext of economy, are persons who could afford very well to marry if they would be content to begin life with simple, honest, wholesome comfort, to be increased as life went on. But they

* N. Y. Tribune.

must have everything at once. They must start where their parents left off. They must dash away at top speed, with horns blowing, and streamers flying, and the eyes of their fashionable friends looking admiringly on.

“It is not prudence that restrains these people. It is not thrift or foresight. It is simply vanity. They love their pleasure too much to forego any portion of it for the satisfaction of matrimony. Love in a cottage, or on a flat, or off the Avenue, is not to their taste. They must have love and an establishment. Moderation and matrimony are seldom incompatible. Magnificence and matrimony commonly are.

“Extravagance, no doubt, is the grand foe of wedlock. But extravagance has its cause, and that cause is the love of pleasure. This is a predominant feature of our society, not of ours peculiarly, but of ours more universally than of any other. Matrimony stands immediately in the way of this passion. It restricts freedom; it limits the range of desire; it divides the purse; it diminishes the means of indulgence; it involves thought for others; it implies care; it

suggests self-restraint and denial; all very unpleasant things for bright young hearts to contemplate. There are delights to be given up, and things undelightful to be accepted. In our community pleasure is open to all. Everybody aspires to opulence, if he does not have it, and thinks luxury his right."

The writer further insists, that a licentious spirit — opposed to all rational and needful restraints over the passions — is another prevailing evil, which has opposed itself to the sanctities and limitations of marriage. Frequent divorces are the natural consequence of such social and moral defection. The Mormon abomination, licentiousness, and Communism, are its legitimate fruits.

From the increasing number of divorces which occur in our own country, one would almost think we were as studious of emulating the customs of France, as her costumes. In that land of gayety and guilt, large numbers never marry, and yet the average number of divorces is one for one hundred and eighty-four marriages. In

some of our Western States, the estimate would be much larger.

Referring to instances of conjugal infelicity, Mrs. Jameson remarks, "Is it not strange that the relation between the two sexes — the passion of love, in short, should not be taken into deeper consideration by our teachers and legislators? People educate and legislate, as if there was no such thing in the world; but ask the priest, and the physician, let them reveal the amount of moral and physical results from this one cause.

"Must love be always discussed in blank verse, as if it were a thing to be played in tragedies or sung in songs, and had nothing to do with the prosaic current of every-day existence, our moral welfare, or eternal salvation. For want of self-management and self-knowledge, look at the evils that ensue, — hasty, improvident, unsuitable marriages; repining, diseased, or vicious celibacy; — irretrievable infamy, — cureless insanity."

By consulting the census of the United States, it will be found that the total number of mar-

riages in our country during the year 1860 was 224,682, or a little more than 8 per centum of the entire population. Small as it may seem, this estimate is proportionately larger than in England and France. If all women, however, were to seek marriage on the most approved plan, it would, of course, be impossible for all to attain it, because of the disparity in numbers of the opposite sex, in consequence of their exposure to accidents and the devastations of war.

They are the wise virgins, therefore, who estimate the immunities of a rightly constituted marriage — the union of hearts as well as hands; and to such only can it prove a perpetual benediction. Marriage is not necessarily an expensive condition of life; it is only made such. Men in the lower walks of life ought not, and need not, be excluded from the privileges of marriage. There is equal, if not superior need for it in their case compared with that of most others: — a necessity such as Malthusians have not dreamed of in their philosophy.

By the last census of Great Britain, we find the number of women who actually *are* single is

1,587,000, of whom 1,230,000 are between twenty and forty years of age. In fact, it may be stated that two adult women out of every five, are single! The North British Review traces this disproportionate number of "Involuntary celibates," to this spreading luxury of the age, and to the too prevalent sentiment on the part of indolent and self-indulgent young men in "Society," that there are many other luxuries much more difficult to forego, than the luxury of a wife and home. Is not this the tendency of things amongst ourselves?

By recent statistical investigations in Great Britain, it is shown that marriage confers a superior longevity. According to the tables of the Registrar-General, those who embraced matrimony lived to the average age of sixty, while those who remained among the celibates, had but little more than two-thirds of that life-term. This startling fact — based upon exact investigations made during a period of ten consecutive years, presents a most potent argument in favor of marriage, with all eligibles who have not yet availed themselves of the benefits of the "Bene-

dictine act." As an act of self-defence, therefore, all spinsters, widowers, and refractory bachelors should, without delay, subscribe to the articles of connubial confederation, and thereby save themselves from so untimely an end. Indeed, Hufeland, a German authority, tells us there is no instance on record of a maid or a bachelor living to a very remarkable age.

A recent writer in Fraser's Magazine has some pertinent remarks exactly in point; where he infers, that the moral suggested by the Registrar-General's Report is, "that we ought all to get married." Married men don't die as unmarried men do: death knocks over the bachelors like ninepins, but he has a knack of sparing the Benedicts. If you are a husband at thirty, the chances that you survive are prodigiously in your favor as against those of your friend who has failed to secure a helpmate. A wife may be an incumbrance in many ways, but if you wish to reach old age, she is worth any number of "Parr's Life-pills."

"As a rule, people are averse to dying, — they don't like it; yet dying is one of those old-

fashioned prejudices which still clings to most of us — men and women alike. ‘Marry, and live,’ — the remedy is simple; why is it not universally and by acclamation adopted? There are not many people, one would fancy, who would rather die than marry.

“The matrimonial market is conducted on radically false principles. Men are willing enough to marry, but they like to marry on an economic scale, and with their eyes open, — knowing what they are about; but, under the present system, ‘a man about town’ who ventures to ask his partner at a waltz to become his partner for life, knows about as much of her as he knows about Columbine in the pantomime, and often a good deal less.” There are now no elective affinities in love; it is all *juxtaposition*, or “appropinquity,” as Thackeray called it in “Vanity Fair.”

Motives to marriage are as varied and erratic now, as they were in Johnson’s days: he says — “When we see the avaricious and crafty taking companions without any inquiry but after farms and money: or the giddy and thoughtless

uniting themselves for life to those whom they have only seen by the light of tapers; when parents make articles for children without enquiring after their consent; when some marry for heirs to disappoint their brothers; and others throw themselves into the arms of those whom they do not love, because they found themselves rejected where they were more solicitous to please; when some marry because their servants cheat them; some because they squander their own money; some because their homes are pestered with company; some because they will live like other people; and some, because they are sick of themselves; — we are not so much inclined to wonder that marriage is sometimes unhappy, as that it appears so little loaded with calamity; and cannot but conclude, that society hath something in itself eminently agreeable to human nature, when we find its pleasures so great, that even the ill-choice of a companion can hardly overbalance them.

“ Those, therefore, of the above description, that should rail against matrimony, should be informed, that they are neither to wonder, nor

repine, that a contract begun on such principles has ended in disappointment.”

He cannot be an unhappy man who has the love and smile of woman to accompany him in every department of life. The world without may look dark and cheerless, but the little asylum of home — lighted up by love — will be cheerful and bright.

If such a bright vision of domestic bliss should chance to befall any solitary seeker after happiness, let him not delude himself into the belief that it is unattainable, or that it is too late for him to atone for his past indiscretion and folly ; but let him hie away with all celerity to the Court of Hymen. — Cupid will show the poor fellow the way thither, — and having wooed and won, let him then love and cherish the boon.

“ If you are for pleasure, marry ; ” says a high authority ; * “ if you prize rosy health, marry. A good wife is Heaven’s last, best gift to man — his angel and minister of graces in a-

* Jeremy Taylor.

merable — his gem of many virtues — his casket of jewels. Her voice is sweet music — her smiles, his brightest day — her kiss, the guardian of his innocence — her arms, the pale of his safety, the balm of his health, the balsam of his life — her industry his surest wealth — her economy, his safest reward — her lips, his faithful counsellors — her bosom, the softest pillow of his cares, and her prayers, the ablest advocates of heaven's blessings on his head."

Franklin, having noticed that a certain mechanic who worked near his office, was always happy and smiling, ventured to ask him one day the secret of his constant cheerfulness.

"No secret, doctor," he replied, "I have one of the best of wives; when I go to work, she always has a kind word of encouragement for me; and when I go home, she meets me with a smile and a kiss, and the tea is sure to be ready; and she has done so many things through the day to please me, that I cannot find in my heart to speak an unkind word to anybody."

The poet, Southey, pays a similar high trib-

ute to marriage, where he says, — “ That I am a very happy man, I owe to my early marriage. When a little over one and twenty I married, under circumstances as singular as they well could be, and to all appearances, as improvident ; but from that hour to this, I have had reasons to bless the day.”

In Burton’s “Anatomy of Melancholy,” there are twelve reasons in favor of marriage, of which the following form part: “ Hast thou means? Thou hast one to keep and increase it. Hast none? Thou hast one to help to get it. Art in prosperity? Thine happiness is doubled. In adversity? She’ll comfort, assist, and bear a part of thy burden, to make it more tolerable. Art at home? She’ll drive away melancholy. Art abroad? She’ll look after thee going from home, and joyfully welcome thy return.”

If the domestic circle is the seminary of the social virtues and the amenities of life ; its dissolution would involve the overthrow of the whole fabric of social and civil life. What a signal realization of this truth was presented to

the gaze of mankind during the "Reign of Terror" in France.

That terrible revolution was preceded by the significant fact, that twenty thousand divorces in the city of Paris were granted in a single year; and was then inaugurated by the shameless exhibition, on a splendid chariot, of a fallen woman, as an impersonation of the goddess of Reason. Infidelity, alike in religion and morals, was the harbinger of that fearful scourge. What wonder that Napoleon should declare that the great want of France was then, a new race of mothers?

It is a beautiful metaphor which represents woman as holding the key of the heart, thus indicating that it is in her power to shut it up in hardness and insensibility, or open it to all the impulses of affection. Little as he, who boasts himself, one of the "lords of creation" may be disposed to concede the point, woman is regal in her power — she wields a mystic and mightier influence over his destiny than he does over hers. This influence is most signally seen — it is at

least brought to a focus — in the control of a mother over her son.

This has often been illustrated, as, for example, in the instance of the great American artist, Benjamin West, who confessed that his mother's kiss made him a painter. The mother of our eminent statesman and jurist, — Daniel Webster, first fostered those abilities which ultimately made him so long distinguished: and that great military chieftain, — Napoleon, himself, used to declare that it was by the admirable training of his mother, that he was subsequently enabled to act with such skill in those dazzling exploits which characterized his extraordinary career. It was, also, due to the judicious guidance of his mother, that England's greatest captain — the hero of Waterloo — became ultimately so eminent, both as a warrior and a statesman.

Abraham Lincoln confessed that, among his pleasantest reminiscences were those of his excellent mother, to whom he imputed the best and brightest qualities he had inherited. On one occasion, he said to a friend, "All I am, or can be, I owe to my angel mother."

Of noble mothers the scroll of History is full ; and in our modern annals, no name is, perhaps, more illustrious than that of the mother of Washington. When the news of her son's successful passage of the Delaware was conveyed to her, with much self-possession, she expressed her joy that the prospects of the country were brightening ; but when she came to those portions of the dispatches which were panegyric of her son, she modestly and coolly observed to the bearers of the good tidings, that — “ George appeared to have deserved well of his country, for such signal service. But my good Sirs,” she added, “ here is too much flattery ! Still, George will not forget the lessons I have taught him — he will not forget himself, though he is the subject of so much praise.”

This single paragraph affords us a glimpse of the honest simplicity which ruled in the home of our foremost among men of note and name, one of the greatest of modern statesmen — Edmund Burke — whose first noteworthy speech in the British Parliament was devoted to the Repeal of the American Stamp Act, — a speech that

elicited the praise of the Earl of Chatham and the gratitude of a continent, — received his first lessons from his excellent mother.

“The mother in her office holds the key
Of the soul; and she it is who stamps the coin
Of character.”

That must have been a beautiful scene in the old chivalric time — the wine circling around the board, and the banquet-hall ringing with sentiment and song — when, the lady of each knightly heart having been pledged by name, St. Leon arose in his turn, and lifting the sparkling cup on high, said, —

“I drink to one
Whose image never may depart,
Deep graven on this grateful heart,
Till memory is dead:
To one whose love for me shall last,
When lighter passions long have passed, —
So holy 'tis, and true;
To one whose love hath longer dwelt,
More deeply fixed, more keenly felt,
Than any pledged by you!”

“ Each guest upstarted at the word,
And laid his hand upon his sword,
With fury-flashing eye ;
And Stanley said, ‘ We crave the name,
Proud Knight, of this most peerless dame,
Whose love you count so high ? ’

“ St. Leon paused, as if he would
Not breathe her name in careless mood
Thus lightly to another, —
Then bent his noble head, as though
To give that word the reverence due,
And gently said, — ‘ My Mother ! ’ ”

For those meditating matrimony, we offer the following hints: 1. True love is founded on esteem, and esteem is the result of intimate acquaintance and confidential intercourse. 2. Similarity of sentiment is the basis of confidential happiness. 3. If wealth and station are to be the main ingredients in the cup of matrimonial felicity, the pure and sweet wine will soon be exhausted, and nothing but bitter dregs remain. 4. Husbands and wives are like locks and keys, that rather break than open, except the wards be answerable. 5. The tree of love should grow up in the family, as the Tree of Life grew up in

the Garden. They that choose their love, should live their choice. They that marry where they affect not, will be likely to affect where they marry not. 6. Never marry but for love, but love only what is lovable. 7. The external attractions of beauty which so fascinate the sense, are evanescent, but nobility of virtue, truth of the affections, are of imperishable value.

These sage maxims may tend to disenchant unwary souls, who otherwise might fall easy victims to the wiles and snares with which the unsuspecting and too-trusting heart is oftimes betrayed.

One fruitful source of matrimonial infelicity is the masquerade, so often kept up between the parties affianced, or contracting. There is a story told of a British officer residing on the Continent, who paraded his daughter on promenade and in saloon, and insidiously propagated the report of her being a great heiress. Of course it was not long before she was overtaken by a fortune-hunter, who also pretended to great expectations in India, — and they were married. The day after the nuptials the dread

denouement came, that they were both moneyless !

Now a last word to the ladies ; — husbands are not yet extremely scarce, they are almost as plentiful as the fishes of the sea or the fowls of the air ; and most women are adroit enough to know how to secure them. Unlike other sport, however, they do not shun the fowler's snare, — they rather like to be captured or captivated. Very few men are invulnerable to Cupid's darts, for there is no suit of mail that is armor-proof against his shafts.

Although giving advice is a thankless office, — yet as coming from one of the sex, we suppose it will be accepted in good faith. “All the common sense that girls need, is, sufficient to understand that men like best that which is most difficult of attainment. Assume entire indifference, and it will pique them into absolute devotion ; convince them of carelessness on the subject of marriage, not by saying so, for that they never believe, but by being occupied and interested in other things.

“The very doubt will rouse curiosity, and a

proposal will be likely to follow, if it were only to see what sort of reception it would get." But while women are not expected to do the wooing, there is much they can do. It will not do to leave a man to himself till he comes to a conviction of his duty, — to take no pains to attract him, or to appear before him with a long face, — provided he is an eligible candidate.

Although it is not supposed to belong to woman's prerogative to select her partner in life, except, — according to tradition, in leap-year; yet, at least, in five cases out of ten, women do marry, ultimately, the men of their choice.

As an illustration of the fact that a woman can and will have her own way in choosing her husband, we might refer to an incident which was noted in the newspapers some years since, of a young lady who refused the proposals of a suitor, recommended by her father, and accepted those of another, whom he did not approve, — a clerk in his establishment. Wishing to prevent the alliance, the father immedi-

ately sent the young gentlemen to England, on business. The lover, arrived in New York, *en route* for the European steamer; and, nothing daunted, the young lady sent a telegram to him, stating that she would be at the Telegraph office, in Boston, if he would place himself in a similar one, in New York, accompanied by a magistrate, that their marriage might be enacted by the agency of the electric flash, before he sailed. This was done; and when, shortly after, the father renewed his solicitations to her about his friend, she declared herself the espoused wife of his clerk — the man of her choice.

What Lord Melbourne said to Queen Victoria on the occasion of her projected marriage with Prince Albert, may be well applied to such cases in ordinary life: — “You will be much more comfortable; for a woman cannot stand alone for any time, in whatever position she may be.”

The status of woman may be regarded as the barometer of society, — the measure of her power for its elevation or depression, it would

be very difficult to estimate. God has placed the highest influence that is known upon earth, in woman's keeping. Well might the poet sing, —

“ Mightier far
Than strength of nerve or sinew, or the sway
Of magic, potent over sun and star,
Is love, — though oft to agony distressed, —
And though his favorite seat be feeble woman's breast.”

We should seek to exalt the institution of marriage to the height of its true dignity in the popular esteem ; — to rescue it from the degradation with which the modern ideas of some have sought to invest it ; — to make its beneficent intent and meaning better understood, and its capabilities better appreciated. So long as it is made an apology for worldly ambition and “ position ” in society, it never can become, what it otherwise would prove, — a well-spring of domestic happiness and the conservator of virtue.

Marriage, rightly constituted, presupposes a union of hearts and hands ; marriage *a la mode*.

requires pageantry and show, — the heart has little or no participation in the affair. Yet thus to ignore the pure, and select pleasures which are indigenious to true home-life, is to become recreant to the finest instincts of our being; while the sacrifice entails upon its votaries the pains and penalties, which are the sure concomitants of a course of folly and dissipation.

That is a miserable style of living, which accepts none of the responsibilities of home, — does not recognize its significance. “In this are interests involved, deep as the roots of national character, vital as the springs of a people’s life. Neglect the claims of home, for the solicitations of pleasure and amusement — let all the ideals of life be comprehended in what is termed ‘society,’ and there strikes a rot into the holiest relations, and the sanctities of domestic honor are disregarded.” *

Having, then, thus briefly surveyed and compared the condition of celibacy with that of marriage, as well as glanced at the impediments

* Dr. Chapin.

which oppose themselves to the attainment of that estate; our pleasant task is ended. In conclusion, therefore, we respectfully submit after all that has been adduced on the subject. — grave or facetious, illustrative, suggestive or admonitory, — the question returns, with accumulative force, why do not women marry?



APPENDIX.

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APPENDIX.

The modern aspects of the marriage question having of late occupied so generally the attention of the press, both of Europe as well as of our own country, it has been deemed necessary to the completion of the design of the present volume, that some direct notice should be taken of the fact. A few supplemental pages have, therefore, been devoted to a selection of extracts* from some of the ablest of these contributions upon the subject of disloyalty to marriage, in the belief that they will, more than anything else, serve to attract attention to the great social evil, and at the same time, suggest its only effectual remedy.

* It is hoped these selections will not be found to exceed the limits usually accorded in courtesy of authorship.

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Our first extract is from an elaborate article on marriage, in *Frazer's Magazine*, August, 1867.

“That libertinism of the most demoralizing character, flourishes in London, in Paris and in New York, cannot be a secret; nor that it is confined to no grade of society. One thing is clear, that the theoretic morality both of the law of the land and of the Christian religion, is systematically set at nought, by masses of men too numerous to punish, and too intelligent to despise; to whom no public argument is addressed; whom no pulpit denunciations affect or reach. And, what makes the evil more untractable, at the back of the offenders lies, as a force in reserve, a theory which they often imagine to justify them, — a theory upheld by earnest persons of both sexes, hitherto wholly guiltless of transgression against the received moralities. Concerning opinion in France, Italy and Germany, we shall not attempt to speak. It concerns us more, that among people who talk English and have Protestant Christianity for the basis of their moral culture, on both sides of the Atlantic, a theory has arisen concerning ‘free love,’ which, however variously applied, in every case would

supersede marriage. 'Free love' assumes that marriage, like friendship, is an affair essentially private, with which it is impertinent and offensive for the state or social opinion to interfere. * * While two persons live together as married, but without children, nothing appears of which the state must necessarily take cognizance. But unless such a condition of things were exceptional, human society would soon die out; and law must of course, be framed on the assumption, that offspring will be the result of unions. The instant that children are born, a duty of protection falls upon the state. Our morality has long ago passed beyond the barbaric principle that children belong to the parents only, and not to the community also. No one now claims that the parent shall be free to expose them to wild beasts, or starve them by cold or famine. Thus the state at once appears as a guardian in the background ready to act, if necessary. We may add, this function of the state (which none will now deny) instantly opens a new topic, — the right to treat as an offence any premeditated destruction of infant life *about to be*. Whether it be expedient to exercise such a right, is quite another question."

The following able article, entitled *The Foes of Wedlock*, is copied entire, from a recent issue of the *New York Tribune* :

“The first step toward curing an evil is the indication of cause. If it be true, as we continually hear it repeated, that the marriage institution is coming into disrepute, that young men avoid it, that an increasing number of those who do not avoid it cease to respect its laws and purposes, and undermine its foundations while they support its superstructure, it is worth while to ask what there is in our modern views and practices to encourage such a state of things ; for there must be something, and something that is neither local nor incidental. The common explanation is, that our extravagant habits of life render marriage impossible at the period when it is most attractive and desirable, namely, in youth. In a word, young people cannot afford to marry. Well, if they cannot afford it, they will not do it, as a rule. We all know that weddings are few in hard times, and it is better that they should be. It is certainly a foolishness, and it comes very near being a crime, to incur extraordinary and indefinite expense when ordinary expenses are only too heavy. But they

who are in this predicament are seldom in it for a long time ; and while they are in it they cast no despute on marriage. They would marry if they could, and the prudence that forbids their marrying forbids their living unregulated lives. Most of those who practise celibacy on the pretext of economy are persons who could afford very well to marry if they would be content to begin life with simple, honest, wholesome comfort, to be increased as life went on. But they must have everything at once. They must start where their parents left off. They must dash away at top speed, with horns blowing, and streamers flying, and the eyes of their fashionable friends looking admiringly on. It is not prudence that restrains these people. It is not thrift or foresight. It is simply vanity. They love their pleasure too much to forego any portion of it for the satisfaction of matrimony. Love in a cottage, or on a flat, or off the Avenue, is not to their taste. They must have love and an establishment. Moderation and matrimony are seldom incompatible. Magnificence and matrimony commonly are.

Extravagance, no doubt, is the grand foe of wedlock. But extravagance has its cause, and

that cause is the love of pleasure. This is a predominant feature of our society, not of ours peculiarly, but of ours more universally than of any other. Matrimony stands immediately in the way of this passion. It restricts freedom; it limits the range of desire; it divides the purse; it diminishes the means of indulgence; it involves thought for others; it implies care; it suggests self-restraint and denial; all very unpleasant things for bright young hearts to contemplate. There are delights to be given up, and things undelightful to be accepted. In our community pleasure is open to all. Everybody aspires to opulence, if he does not have it, and thinks luxury his right. Imaginations are heated, and desires are glowing, opportunity is various, and gratifications are close at hand, and the brilliant livers set the example which is infectious. Through all classes, wedlock pulls in these gaudy kites. Childbirth is painful. It mars beauty; it destroys bloom; it takes away the softness of the flesh; it renders the wife less attractive to the eye than the mistress was. The mother must stay at home in the nursery instead of going to the opera, the theatre, or the ball. She must watch her children when she would

rather drive with her husband, and must hear them cry when she would infinitely prefer hearing him read or talk. Children are expensive, too; the more of them there are, the fewer bronzes and pictures. There must be the fewer laces and jewels, the fewer cloaks and hats, the fewer journeys, the fewer dinners, and suppers, and merry-makings. And so childbirth is avoided, if possible by honest means, but, these failing, by means dishonest. The poor find the door-steps of the rich a convenient substitute for foundling hospitals where these do not exist. The rich find other less cruel means of delivering themselves from an incumbrance which interferes with the enjoyment of their existence. These enjoyments may not be coarse or low; they may be refined and intellectual; but whether they be one or the other, they are enjoyments, and are prized as enjoyments. And as enjoyments they have the effect to render distasteful the duties and cares of married life. They prevent young people from entering into wedlock, and they tempt them, having entered in, to abuse it.

But behind this passion for pleasure is another feeling which we are deeply convinced is work-

ing against the institution of marriage. We call it a feeling, for with most it is little more than a feeling, though with many it is a faith and a philosophy. Faith, philosophy, feeling, whichever it be, it amounts to an assertion of the claims, not to say the prerogatives of instinct or of equal sanctity with those of conscience. The element of passion has come into honor; and as the law of the passions is lawlessness, it is not strange that it should inaugurate its new dispensation by spoken as well as unspoken protest against an institution whose design and effect is to submit the strongest of all the passions to regulation by calling in the authority of the State and the decree of the Church to sustain its pretensions. All institutions and usages are assailed by these powers of license with vehemence proportioned to their antiquity and their repressive character. But no institution confronts instinct so directly and so imperiously as this institution of matrimony. The doctrine of elective affinities meets with no mercy at its hands; and the disciples of the doctrine are summarily consigned to the worst perdition it has at its disposal. One wife, and absolute fidelity to her, 'in sickness and in health, in sorrow

and in joy, for richer for poorer, for better for worse,' is the matrimonial requirement, and a very hard requirement it is for eager, craving, restless, fickle human nature to acquiesce in. Attraction does not pull steadily in such long and narrow ways. The charm of variety makes itself felt. Stolen delights will be snatched at when possible, and quick-witted imaginations will always be ready with good reasons for seizing and enjoying them. There is a rush for Indiana. There are long files of divorce cases; separations are frequent, and concubinage, outside of wedlock and inside of it, is so common that it is rarely mentioned. There is no denying or concealing the fact that, under our principle of liberty, which adopts human nature, the lower elements in it which have from time immemorial been repressed by arbitrary rule, make bold to arraign the rule that has repressed them, and insist on their right to obey their own law of impulse, regardless of consequences. Oneida communities and such like experiments are legitimate outgrowths from this slimy region of our theory — and they have their genteel parallels in civilized society — which will practise what it will

never avow. It is a phase of our social experience which we must pass through, very disagreeable, very disgusting, very alarming, but incidental after all, and transient. We have no fear that marriage is about to be abolished. It has too many friends among the wise and prudent to be exposed to a dangerous peril."

The London correspondent of the *New York Times*, July 25, 1868, furnishes the following remarks on the marriage question in England :

"The most widely-circulated of the London dailies has anticipated the dull season by introducing the old, well-worn question of how much income suffices for a prudent or justifiable marriage. Gushing girls and not less sentimental boys are sure they could get on very well on £150 a year ; mothers with marriageable daughters stipulate for £250 ; but cynical bachelors will not hear of less than £600, and are rather disposed not to marry at any price. In this matter the disciples of Mr. Mill, in theory at least, are increasing in numbers. All the overpopulation, poverty, vice, crime and misery of the world, comes of early and imprudent marriages. If people had only a reasonable self-control, and refused to assume obligations they

could not fulfil, there would have been no glut in the labor market, no need of English or Irish emigration ; every child born would be provided for, and humanity, if less numerous, would be more respectable and happier.

In the higher classes of English society, marriage is effectually discouraged by the tariff placed upon it in the increased cost of living and the greater demands of fashion. Men will not, and women cannot marry, unless their incomes reach the required expenditure of the sphere in life to which they have been educated. The man has his furnished lodging and his club, with a free range of society ; women become independent and turn their attention to politics, social science, literature and art. Single men and single women of mature age are coming to be an important feature in English society. Monks and nuns are considered immoral, and a celibate clergy abominable ; but thousands of celibates of both sexes mingling in society is wise and prudent, and sanctioned by the highest authorities. The Ritualists sneer at the wives and daughters of their Bishops, and, as they get to practise confession, pine for an unmarried clergy. But in the lower classes, where prudence

is most needed, such notions are entirely inoperative. With no hope beyond a bare subsistence, ending in the work-house, every one gets married as soon as possible. Thousands come together with no more ceremony than the sparrows, and have children nearly as fast. Enough for one is enough for two, and so on. There is a premium of two and sixpence a week paid to the mothers of illegitimate babies, and three or four will give her a decent maintenance. It is convenient to have a wife to bang about, and children, by their labor, when well, and by sick clubs and burial societies, are a source of profit. They are a trouble, but opium is cheap; and a man with a wife and children has strong claims upon charities and the rates. There are five or six millions of people in these islands who are either to continue this state of things or be elevated by education, universal suffrage, or some other fitting agency, out of it. 'Why don't the negroes rise?' was the passionate question of Mrs. Browning during the war in America. Some people are above and some below the plane of political revolution. People rise to the level of their ideas — when they have none, they are quiet."

From an article in the *American Quarterly Church Review* on "*Frequent Divorces in New England.*"

"No thoughtful man can behold, without solicitude, the low grade of domestic morals which seems to prevail to a large extent in our New England families. * * The transfer of responsibility for the manners and morals of children from parents to public-school teachers, the common rudeness and arrogance of boys and girls, the great prevalence of untruth amongst the young, the license and familiarity of intercourse which is allowed between the growing youth of different sexes, the murder of living but unborn children, the number of illegitimate births—all these are sufficient to fill one with consternation and dismay. To all these signs of demoralization there is to be added one, which is closely connected with them, which fosters them, and is fostered by them in turn. We refer to the very great and alarming frequency of divorce. This has grown to be a portentous evil. It is certainly one of the most significant signs of the real condition of our domestic life. It is communicating a sad coloring to the whole inner life of the people. It is working its way from the lower strata

of society upward, and exerting a decided influence in the control of public opinion. Its progress is increasing, and at the present rate, a time seems to be rapidly approaching when the public sentiment on this point shall be almost wholly debauched. Lest we should seem to be only an alarmist in this matter, we will state some facts which will fairly illustrate the progress of this social vice amongst us during the last five years. Not to be too tedious, we select our principal facts from the statistics of the State of Vermont, as furnished by its indefatigable Secretary. We select Vermont as being by geographical position the most secluded of the New England States, the least affected by foreign immigration, and by marriages of mixed nationalities, and probably, with New Hampshire, the most tenacious in maintaining the traditions and social morals of the early settlers. Vermont is divided into fourteen counties, and for the last five years the population has not materially changed.

For the year 1862 there were granted 91 divorces; for 1863, 105; for 1864, 101; for 1865, 141; for 1866, 155; a sufficiently rapid increase one would think, to alarm the most phlegmatic

mind; a steady increase from 91, in 1862, to 155, in 1866; the fifth year alone showing an increase of 70 per cent. beyond the first year. From another point of view, however, it comes still more closely home. Observe that these divorces have been increasing while the population of the State has remained stationary. The whole number of libels granted in the last five years amounts to 593. We have then 593 divorces to 315,098 people, or one divorce to every 532 persons. Here again, if we deduct 50 per cent. for the children and youth under eighteen, we have one divorce to every 266 marriageable persons. And as there are two parties to every divorce, there are two out of every 200 marriageable persons, or one man in every 133 men, and one woman in every 133 women, personally concerned in this matter. But perhaps a more startling view is derived from a comparison between the last five years of divorces, and the last five years of marriages. There have been, as we have said, in five years 593 divorces. There is also an aggregate of 11,325 marriages reported during the same time, which, however, it would be fair to state at 11,400, so as to cover the number of marriages not reported through

accident or carelessness. Compare then 593 divorces with 11,400 marriages, and we have this result of one divorce to every 19 marriages. Or, in other words, to every 38 persons married during the last five years, two are concerned in a divorce. We might add, that at this rate there is a certain degree of probability that during the next five years, two at least, out of every 38 persons entering into the married estate, will be divorced. If the annual increase of divorces goes on unchecked, the proportion will be still larger. Finally, the prospect is very dark from another point of view. The last recorded year of marriages gives us the number of 2,983 (call it 3,000 to compensate for possible errors). This is the highest number of marriages in this State in any one year. Now compare this with the number of divorces, 155, for the same year. It will be found that whereas, five years since there was less than one divorce to every 22 marriages, the latest yearly record assures us of one divorce to every 19 marriages. It affords but sorry comfort to reflect that Vermont is not alone in this melancholy retrograde march of domestic morals in New England. In the State of Massachusetts, things are not quite so bad, but bad

enough, there being during the last five years one divorce to 44 marriages, and during the last recorded year, one to 37 marriages. The State of Connecticut shows a record worse than Vermont. There, the aggregate of five years of divorces to five years of marriages is as one to eleven, and during the last year as one to ten. Neither the States of Maine, Rhode Island, or New Hampshire have collected full statistics. From the observations we have made, however, and from the information we have received, we have no reason to suppose that either State can give at the best, so good a record as Massachusetts. The estimated number of divorces in the State of Maine for the last five years is 950, which, in proportion to the population, gives one divorce to every 320 men and women above eighteen years of age, placing Maine upon a very little better standard than Vermont. So far then as numbers and calculations can approximate to the exact truth, the prospect is dismal. We well remember the astonishment and dismay expressed by two persons who had been obliged to leave the northern part of Virginia at the close of the war. When they learned the custom amongst us in regard to divorces, they both

declared that, in all their experience in that part of Virginia where they lived together for many years, and where one was born, they heard of but three instances of divorce, and then it was invariably at the cost of the reputation of the offending party; and *here* (said they) it seems to be considered a trifle, and to be almost as freely contemplated and resorted to as marriage. Now what is the law and the practice in New England?

Here again we take for illustration the law of the State of Vermont, which is almost identical with that of the other five States, unless it be Massachusetts. After stating that on account of consanguinity, or insufficient age, or the idiocy or lunacy of one of the parties, or force or fraud used to obtain consent, or of impotency, marriages in certain cases may be declared void from the beginning; the law goes on to mention these other causes for which the Supreme Court of the county in which one or both of the parties reside, may grant a divorce, namely: 1st. Adultery in either party. 2nd. The sentence of either party to confinement in State Prison for three years or longer. 3d. Intolerable severity by either of the parties. 4th. Wilful desertion for

three consecutive years. 5th. Seven years' unexplained and silent absence. 6th. Neglect of the husband to support his wife, he having sufficient pecuniary ability. All libels based upon either of these conditions, and proved, must be granted by the Court. And finally, section forty-two thus declares: "Whenever a marriage shall be dissolved, pursuant to the provisions of this chapter, the parties shall be deemed single and may lawfully marry again." Here then the law ignores all distinction between separation *a mensa* for the protection of suffering subjects of the State, on the one hand, and divorce *a vinculo*, on the other hand. The latter is the only mode of separation recognized in these statutes as lawful; and in this State, and all the New England States excepting Massachusetts, it is employed in all cases without distinction. Thus, while 184 bills of divorce have been granted in Vermont for the last five years for the cause of adultery, 409 bills, giving exactly the same freedom as to marriage, have been granted for various other causes; as for wilful desertion 238, intolerable severity (exercised in some cases by the wife) 117, refusal to support 11, and for causes not mentioned 43. The law of Vermont

allows the parties to all these 409 bills, which are granted for some other cause than adultery, to marry again, as if there were no existing divinely-appointed relations between them. This estate of marriage is treated by the laws of Vermont and other New England States as if it were never in anywise under the control of Christ's law ; as if its sanctity were a myth ; as if it were the sole creation and ordinance of the State, and to be dealt with and rent asunder as a simple affair of proletarian convenience and policy ; as if its solemn contract was hardly so coercive as that which one might make with his wood-sawyer ; as if all its vows, spoken and implied, were binding only so long as the caprice and humor of the parties agreed, and then, to be put away with a slight formality, and a new contract with another entered into, as one would cast off old garments, present them to a needy friend, and reclothe himself in new apparel. Upon this ground, therefore, we declare the law prevailing in New England as to divorces, and the practice under the law, to be treacherous to family union, contrary to Christian morals, a snare to the thoughtless and ignorant, an opportunity to the depraved, an offence and sin against

the Divine law, and, in short, a method of legalized polygamy. We cannot attempt to dwell upon all the painful thoughts to which this view of the subject gives rise.

The immorality threatens a beautiful and favored portion of our common country with a cloud of moral evil, scandal, domestic strife, and debauchery. Families become unsettled. The relation of husband and wife assumes the form of a bare partnership in business. Children lose their just inheritance of baptism, of home ties, of family name, and family honor. The registration reports may record that the number of illegitimate children in this State average less than in England, but their number would be fearfully increased should we apply the same laws here as there in respect to matrimony and divorce. Legalized divorce is not known in England as it is here. There is but one cause acknowledged there which can dissolve the marriage tie. * *

* * * The fact is, that although public sentiment revolts at the simultaneous polygamy of the Mormons, yet, in New England the course of things appears to be tender towards that which moralists and jurists call successive polygamy. Can we regard such things with patience?

Ought they to be allowed to poison our domestic and social life? Is not the law and the practice under it viewed by the light of the Christian law, immoral and corrupt?

We pass to the third point, the causes of this extraordinary frequency of divorce. These are not difficult to describe. First, and before all, the cause and provocation to many divorces is the very facility with which they are obtained. It is so easy on account of weariness, incompatibility of temper, longings for forbidden pleasures, unsatisfied vanity, covetousness, capricious likes and dislikes, to obtain a legal divorce, that it is obtained. That license which would hardly be thought of, if absolutely prohibited, is readily seized, when it is thrust into the hand, pressed upon the mind, proclaimed to the ear, and assured to possession by compliance only with a slight formality. Human nature cannot resist this temptation. The facility with which divorces are granted, and the so-called freedom which it offers to marry again, presents a most attractive bait to young, thoughtless, shallow, vain, or designing persons. There is really nothing to hinder a frequent change of husbands or wives, as the case may be. Those who enter into the

married estate are always conscious that they need not bear the yoke longer than they wish to. It can be thrown off by a slight artifice, either by mutual agreement, or at the will of one of them. Each divorce sows the seed for others. It is the town talk. The newspapers give the often disgusting particulars, with an unholy relish. The men give the details of it in the tavern, over the counter, and at the noonday rest. The women gossip over it, month after month, at their calls, tea-drinkings, or sociables. The children hear it discussed freely by their elders at the daily meals, with comments and details often that they should not hear. They all, men, women, and children, see that it is a legal act, frequently occurring, recognized by the Statute Law, and accepted by the people. They see the actors in it, and their children, living in the same reputation as heretofore, and they hear them extenuating and justifying their course. They see the Supreme Court of the County, which they have been trained to regard as the very impersonation of justice and dignity, sanctioning the dissolution of the marriage tie. They see Justices of the Peace, perhaps, sometimes Ministers of the Gospel, uniting these divorced persons again

with others in holy matrimony. And what is the result? What *can* it be, other than the general corruption of the public confidence, and contemptuous disregard for the appeals of the few remaining fastidious, reverent, and religious citizens. * *

In the State of Vermont, as the law now stands, since abolishing the publication of the bans, it regulates only the age and degree of relationship of the parties, it forbids polygamy, it names the authorized ministers and provides a form of certificate of marriage when consummated. Besides this, there is absolutely no law in Vermont on the subject. Men and women, known and unknown, publicly and privately, at any hour of the day or night, without signature, without witnesses, without identification, clandestinely or otherwise, upon the bare impulse of the moment, or by deliberate plotting, are allowed to follow out any device or desire which their own prudence, passion, folly, or cunning may dictate. The law gives no attention or respect to the subject which tends to dignify and vindicate the true honor of marriage. It affords the officiating minister no protection against deceit or fraud, it does nothing to identify the par-

ties for the sake of peace and good order of the community. It gives the friends of the innocent and unsuspecting no opportunity to detect and expose profligate designs. It does nothing to secure the family circle from possible invasions. It simply ignores, as far as possible, the whole subject. In these sentiments, we doubt not, our readers most heartily concur. Should not then the statute law of every State establish "precautions and protective formalities" by which the parties to a marriage shall be distinctly identified as citizens in their respective communities; by which their intention of marriage shall be duly signed in the presence of competent residents, and registered by the proper officer; by which a definite interval of time may be allowed after the registration, witnesses required to be present at the marriage, and a certificate or license furnished for the assurance of the officiating Minister or Justice, perhaps to be countersigned by him, and returned to the office of the Town Clerk? These simple requirements will procure greater respect for the union thus solemnized. They will put no bar to the marriage of any honest citizen, whatever be his rank or station; they will protect the community to

some extent against the misfortune of ill-judged, hasty, clandestine, and perhaps criminal, unions ; and by thus elevating the views of the people as to marriage, they will contribute, it is hoped and believed, to lessen the number of divorces. And finally, efforts shall be made, all good men united, and the public sentiment aroused where practicable, to procure such change in the law as shall prohibit the dissolution of the marriage bond except only in case of the adultery of one of the parties ; increasing also, if need be, the pains and penalties incurred by adultery ; and in special cases of hardship authorizing separation, if necessary be, *a mensa et thoro* ; leaving the way open to future reconciliation of the parties, but absolutely refusing permission to marry again while both the parties live, and treating all such marriages as criminal."

From the *Saturday Review*, "The Girl of the Period," is an article so piquant and truthful that we copy it entire.

"Time was when the stereotyped phrase, "a fair young English girl," meant the ideal of womanhood ; to us, at least, of home birth and breeding. It meant a creature generous, capable, and modest ; something franker than a French-

woman, more to be trusted than an Italian, as brave as an American, but more refined, as domestic as a German and more graceful. It meant a girl who could be trusted alone if need be, because of the innate purity and dignity of her nature, but who was neither bold in bearing nor masculine in mind ; a girl who, when she married, would be her husband's friend and companion, but never his rival ; one who would consider their interests identical, and not hold him as just so much fair game for spoil ; who would make his house his true home and place of rest, not a mere passage-place for vanity and ostentation to go through ; a tender mother, an industrious housekeeper, a judicious mistress. We prided ourselves as a nation on our women. We thought we had the pick of creation in this fair young English girl of ours, and envied no other men their own. We admired the languid grace and subtle fire of the South ; the docility and affectionateness of the East seemed to us sweet and simple and restful ; the vivacious sparkle of the trim and sprightly Parisienne was a pleasant little excitement when we met with it in its own domain ; but our allegiance never wandered from our brown-haired girls at home, and our hearts were less vagrant

than our fancies. This was in the old time, and when English girls were content to be what God and nature had made them. Of late years we have changed the pattern, and have given to the world a race of women as utterly unlike the old insular ideal as if we had created another nation altogether. The girl of the period, and the fair young English girl of the past, have nothing in common save ancestry and their mother-tongue ; and even of this last the modern version makes almost a new language through the copious additions it has received from the current slang of the day.

The girl of the period is a creature who dyes her hair and paints her face, as the first articles of her personal religion ; whose sole idea of life is plenty of fun and luxury ; and whose dress is the object of such thought and intellect as she possesses. Her main endeavor in this is to outvie her neighbors in the extravagance of fashion. No matter whether, as in the time of crinolines, she sacrificed decency, or, as now, in the time of trains, she sacrifices cleanliness ; no matter either, whether she makes herself a nuisance and an inconvenience to every one she meets. The girl of the period has done away with such moral

muffishness as consideration for others, or regard for counsel and rebuke. It was all very well in old-fashioned times, when fathers and mothers had some authority and were treated with respect, to be tutored and made to obey, but she is far too fast and flourishing to be stopped in mid-career by these slow old morals; and as she dresses to please herself, she does not care if she displeases every one else. Nothing is too extraordinary and nothing too exaggerated for her vitiated taste; and things which in themselves would be useful reforms if let alone become monstrosities worse than those which they have displaced so soon as she begins to manipulate and improve. If a sensible fashion lifts the gown out of the mud, she raises hers midway to her knee. If the absurd structure of wire and buckram, once called a bonnet, is modified to something that shall protect the wearer's face without putting out the eyes of her companion, she cuts hers down to four straws and a rosebud, or a tag of lace and a bunch of glass beads.

If there is a reaction against an excess of Rowland's Macassar, and hair shiny and sticky with grease is thought less nice than if left clean and healthily crisp, she dries and frizzes and sticks

hers out on end like certain savages in Africa, or lets it wander down her back like Madge Wild-fire's, and thinks herself all the more beautiful the nearer she approaches in look to a maniac or a negress. With purity of taste she has lost also that far more precious purity and delicacy of perception which sometimes mean more than appears on the surface. What the *demi-monde* does in its frantic efforts to excite attention, she also does in imitation. If some fashionable *dévergondée en evidence* is reported to have come out with her dress below her shoulder-blades, and a gold strap for all the sleeve thought necessary, the girl of the period follows suit next day; and then wonders that men sometimes mistake her for her prototype, or that mothers of girls not quite so far gone as herself refuse her as a companion for their daughters. She has blunted the fine edges of feeling so much that she cannot understand why she should be condemned for an imitation of form which does not include imitation of fact; she cannot be made to see that modesty of appearance and virtue ought to be inseparable, and that no good girl can afford to appear bad, under penalty of receiving the contempt awarded to the bad.

This imitation of the *demi-monde* in dress leads to something in manner and feeling, not quite so pronounced, perhaps, but far too like to be honorable to herself or satisfactory to her friends. It leads to slang, bold talk, and fastness ; to the love of pleasure and indifference to duty ; to the desire of money before either love or happiness ; to uselessness at home, dissatisfaction with the monotony of ordinary life, and horror of all useful work ; in a word, to the worst forms of luxury and selfishness, to the most fatal effects arising from want of high principle and absence of tender feeling.

The girl of the period envies the queens of the *demi-monde* far more than she abhors them. She sees them gorgeously attired and sumptuously appointed, and she knows them to be flattered, fêted, and courted with a certain disdainful admiration of which she catches only the admiration, while she ignores the disdain. They have all for which her soul is hungering, and she never stops to reflect at what a price they have bought their gains, and what fearful moral penalties they pay for their sensuous pleasures. She sees only the coarse gilding on the base token, and shuts her eyes to the hideous figure in the midst, and

the foul legend written round the edge. It is this envy of the pleasures, and indifference to the sins, of these women of the *demi-monde* which is doing such infinite mischief to the modern girl. They brush too closely by each other, if not in actual deeds, yet in aims and feelings; for the luxury which is bought by vice with the one is the thing of all in life most passionately desired by the other, though she is not yet prepared to pay quite the same price. Unfortunately, she has already paid too much, — all that once gave her distinctive national character. No one can say of the modern English girl that she is tender, loving, retiring, or domestic. The old fault so often found by keen-sighted Frenchwomen, that she was so fatally *romanesque*, so prone to sacrifice appearances and social advantages for love, will never be set down to the girl of the period. Love indeed is the last thing she thinks of, and the least of the dangers besetting her. Love in a cottage, that seductive dream which used to vex the heart and disturb the calculations of prudent mothers, is now a myth of past ages. The legal barter of herself for so much money, representing so much dash, so much luxury and pleasure, — that is her idea of marriage; the only idea worth entertaining.

For all seriousness of thought respecting the duties or the consequences of marriage, she has not a trace. If children come, they find but a stepmother's cold welcome from her; and if her husband thinks that he has married anything that is to belong to him, — a *tacens et placens uxor* pledged to make him happy, — the sooner he wakes from his hallucination and understands that he has simply married some one who will condescend to spend his money on herself, and who will shelter her indiscretions behind the shield of his name, the less severe will be his disappointment. She has married his house, his carriage, his balance at the banker's, his title; and he himself is just the inevitable condition clogging the wheel of her fortune; at best an adjunct, to be tolerated with more or less patience as may chance. For it is only the old-fashioned sort, not girls of the period *pur sang*, that marry for love, or put the husband before the banker. But she does not marry easily. Men are afraid of her; and with reason. They may amuse themselves with her for an evening, but they do not take her readily for life. Besides, after all her efforts, she is only a poor copy of the real thing; and the real thing is far more

amusing than the copy, because it is real. Men can get that whenever they like; and when they go into their mothers' drawing-rooms, to see their sisters and their sisters' friends, they want something of quite different flavor. *Toujours perdix* is bad providing all the world over; but a continual weak imitation of *toujours perdix* is worse. If we must have only one kind of thing, let us have it genuine; and the queens of St. John's Wood in their unblushing honesty, rather than their imitators and make-believes in Bayswater and Belgravia. For, at whatever cost of shocked self-love or pained modesty it may be, it cannot be too plainly told to the modern English girl that the net result of her present manner of life is to assimilate her as nearly as possible to a class of women whom we must not call by their proper — or improper — name. And we are willing to believe that she has still some modesty of soul left hidden under all this effrontery of fashion, and that, if she could be made to see herself as she appears to the eyes of men, she would mend her ways before too late.

It is terribly significant of the present state of things when men are free to write as they do of the women of their own nation. Every word

of censure flung against them is two-edged, and wounds those who condemn as much as those who are condemned; for surely it need hardly be said that men hold nothing so dear as the honor of their women, and that no one living would willingly lower the repute of his mother or his sisters. It is only when these have placed themselves beyond the pale of masculine respect that such things could be written as are written now; when they become again what they were once, they will gather round them the love and homage and chivalrous devotion which were then an Englishwoman's natural inheritance. The marvel, in the present fashion of life among women, is, how it holds its ground in spite of the disapprobation of men. It used to be an old-time notion that the sexes were made for each other, and that it was only natural for them to please each other, and to set themselves out for that end. But the girl of the period does not please men. She pleases them as little as she elevates them; and how little she does that, the class of women she has taken as her models of herself testifies. All men whose opinion is worth having prefer the simple and genuine girl of the past, with her tender little ways and pretty

bashful modesties, to this loud and rampant modernization, with her false red hair and painted skin, talking slang as glibly as a man, and by preference leading the conversation to doubtful subjects. She thinks she is piquante and exciting when she thus makes herself the bad copy of a worse original; and she will not see that though men laugh with her they do not respect her, though they flirt with her they do not marry her; she will not believe that she is not the kind of thing they want, and that she is acting against nature and her own interests when she disregards their advice and offends their taste. We do not see how she makes out her account, viewing her life from any side; but all we can do is to wait patiently until the national madness has passed and our women have come back again to the old English ideal, once the most beautiful, the most modest, the most essentially womanly in the world."

From the *New York Times*, August 2, 1868.

"To none of the civil relations of society and none of the great subjects of jurisprudence, has more profound thought been given than to the subject of marriage — its legal rights and duties, the nature of its bond and the conditions of its

divorce. The laws of the various States of Europe differ very widely on the subject. In some — and even in some Catholic countries like Belgium — the facilities for civil divorce put it within the reach of every wedded couple who desire it; while in others, and especially in those Catholic countries where the Ecclesiastical power is supreme, and the laws of the Church are enforced by the State, divorce is not tolerated as a remedy for marital evils. In England, until lately, the difficulties of obtaining a divorce were so great, that very few were applied for; but since jurisdiction in the matter has been taken from the House of Lords, and the Divorce Court has been established, the number of applications has very greatly increased. In this country there is the widest diversity of law on the subject of divorce. The regulation of the matter is under the control of the separate States; and the principles that govern it in one locality, or that have governed it at one period, differ fundamentally from those that exist, or have been tried, at other places and periods. In one State divorces may be had for the asking, and almost without assignable cause; in another, divorce may be entirely unknown, and in no case permitted. In some

States, the causes for divorce have been limited to the two set forth in the New Testament ; in others they have been multiplied indefinitely. The effects of these different laws upon society, upon the marriage relation, upon domestic happiness, upon family necessities, and upon the welfare of the State, have been as varied as their nature. But there is no doubt that where there have been the greatest facilities for divorce, and the largest number of separations, both civil society and domestic life have grievously suffered — to say nothing of the public morals.

President Woolsey, of Yale College, has been calling public attention — especially in New England — to this important question by a series of able papers published in the *New Englander*, the third of which appears in the July number.

The present paper is devoted mainly to an analysis of the laws of the different States of the American Union regulating the matter of divorce. The variations between the different States are shown to be marvellous ; but we could give no just idea of them in any less space than is occupied in the elaborate article itself. The differences between the present period and past times are no less striking ; but for a comprehension of

this point, also, the reader must be referred to the review.

Having got through with the legal branch of the subject, President Woolsey approaches the practical facts of divorce as they exist in this country at the present time. He asks: 'Is it true that divorces are increasing? Is it true that the number of them is at all equal to the number in those States in Europe where they are most freely granted? Is there any difference between the different States in the number of successful petitions for this privilege?'

The facts he produces, though limited and partial, are startling—especially as regards his own State of Connecticut. Thus, for example, the divorces of Massachusetts for four years were 1,022, or one to 44 of the marriages. In Ohio, the divorces are in the ratio of one to 25 of the marriages. In Connecticut, during the last eight years, there were 2,910 divorces, or nearly one to eleven of all the marriages in the State! Nay, the exhibit can be made even worse than this, for it is estimated that 800 of the marriages were of Catholics, who are not among the claimants for divorce; and deducting them we have the ratio of one divorce less than eight and one-half so-

called Protestant, or rather non-Catholic marriages! Thus Connecticut is not only in this respect at the bottom of the list of States, but it is worse even than Prussia, where the marriage laws are notoriously loose, and yet where divorces are less in proportion than half what they are in Connecticut. The ratio in Connecticut is fourfold what it is in Massachusetts, and there are absolutely more divorces in Connecticut, on the average, by 108 (viz: 364 every year) than in Massachusetts, a State with two and a half times as many inhabitants. There were in 1866, more than half as many as in Ohio, a State with almost five times the population. In Massachusetts, in 1864, there were 24 divorces to 100,000 inhabitants; in Ohio there were 33 to the same number; but in Connecticut there were over 87 to 100,000 population; and bad as this is again, it tells too good a story, for the estimate of population embraces all the Catholics.

Thus (says Dr. Woolsey) Connecticut, according to all of these measures of its position, occupies a bad eminence among the States; but (he adds in a foot-note) Indiana and Missouri certainly have no statistics of divorce, and we suppose the same to be true of all the Western States. A friend residing in Indiana estimates

the annual divorces there to be almost 2,000. If it be so, the ratio to the number of inhabitants surpasses that of Connecticut.


One comparison more is given in the article, which we quote, as follows :

“ Dr. Dwight, in his sermon on divorce, says that when the floodgates were opened at the outbreak of the French revolution, there were, according to the Abbe Gregoire, 20,000 divorces granted in France in about a year and a half. Now, there were, it is said, in 1791, about twenty-six millions of persons in France. Suppose now that two-thirds of these divorces belonged to one year. According to the rate in Connecticut in 1866, there ought to have been in France over 26,000, or, according to the rate in France, there ought to have been less than 266 instead of 488 that year in Connecticut. If things go on so, people will begin to wish that the lower classes, among whom now divorces principally prevail, could come under Catholic influence.”

Dr. Woolsey calls this great social evil of divorce the ‘disease that is undermining family life.’ And he contends that the present law of Connecticut for facilitating divorce must bear the burden of the fearful immorality.

1874.

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