



Dr. Samuel K. Jennings

THE
Married Lady's Companion,
OR,
POOR MAN'S FRIEND.

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Part Second. *Addressed to the Newly Married Lady.* Excerpt.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

MADAM,

YOU have happily allied yourself to the man for whom you leave your father's house, for whom you cheerfully forsake all the world besides. With him, as your protector and bosom friend, you promise yourself many endearing pleasures. You perceive that "Innocence, candor, sincerity, modesty, generosity, heroism and piety, express themselves with grace ineffable in every attitude, in every feature of the man you love."* You are therefore highly concerned how you may secure an equal share, and a permanent continuance of his affection and esteem. On this point turns your future happiness or misery. Mutual love and tenderness properly preserved, secures to you the greatest earthly blessing. In proportion to the want or loss of these, you are miserable for life.—Although this consideration very much concerns your husband as well as yourself, yet I must be permitted to assure you, that you are most deeply interested. His engagements as a man, will necessarily keep up his attention. He will have frequent occasion to mix with agreeable and interesting company. His acquaintance will be extended,

* St. Pierre. [NHC note: Jacques-Henri Bernardin St. Pierre (1737-1814): "Every trait of beauty may be referred to some virtue, as to innocence, candor, generosity, modesty, or heroism."]

[NHC note. Painting above: *The Life of George Washington—The Citizen* (detail), depicting the 1759 wedding of George Washington and Martha Custis. Painted by Junius Brutus Stearns, lithograph by Régnier; Paris, 1854. Library of Congress.]

his amusements multiplied. He of course will have an asylum, should home become tiresome or disagreeable. But your house is your only refuge, your husband your only companion. Should he abandon you, solitude, anxiety and tears, must be your unhappy lot. You cannot fly for amusement to the race ground, to the chase, to the card table, or to the tavern. You cannot look out for a gallant, to whom you may impart your slighted love. You must either languish in bitterness, or learn to compose your feelings, by stoical indifference.

CHAPTER II. *PROPER CONDUCT OF THE WIFE TOWARDS HER HUSBAND.*

1. As it your great wish and interest, to enjoy much of your husband's company and conversation, it will be important to acquaint yourself with his temper, his inclination, and his manner, that you may render your house, your person and your disposition quite agreeable to him. By observing with accuracy, and guarding your words and actions with prudence, you may quickly succeed according to your wishes.
2. Here perhaps you ask, why so much pains necessary on my part? I will answer your question candidly. Your choice in forming the connexion, was at best a passive one. Could you have acted the part of a courtier and made choice of a man whose disposition might have corresponded precisely with yours, there would have been less to do afterwards. But under present circumstances, it is your interest to adapt yourself to your husband, whatever may be his peculiarities. Again, nature has made man the stronger, the consent of mankind has given him superiority over his wife, his inclination is, to claim his natural and acquired rights. He of course expects from you a degree of condescension, and he feels himself the more confident of the propriety of his claim, when he is informed, that St. Paul adds his authority to its support. "Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord, for the husband is the head of his wife."
3. In obedience then to this precept of the gospel, to the laws of custom and of nature, you ought to cultivate a cheerful and happy submission. "The way of virtue is the way of happiness." The truth of this maxim will be verified to you in your conformity to this duty. By such submission, you will secure to yourself the advantages of a willing obedience on the part of your husband to the counter part of Paul's command, "Husbands love your wives as your own flesh," & .*

* There are some women, who pluming themselves upon their great spirit, spurn at this instruction, and claim the right of "*superior equality*" with their husbands. In most instances they pay very dearly for their arrogance. If they secure a degrading obedience, they necessarily loose that tender and engaging fondness and attention, which every condescending wife is sure to receive from the man of good sense, taste and refinement.

4. The great attention and submission, practiced by most men in time of courtship, are well calculated to raise in the female mind, false expectation of an uniform continuance of the same officiousness after marriage. For the honey moon you may not be disappointed. But the charge of a family will soon teach any man, that he has something more to do than live a life of courtship. The discharge of his duty as a father, a friend, and a citizen, will gradually divert him in some degree from that punctilious attention to your person, with which you are so highly pleased.
5. Should you begin to discover this change, be careful to conduct yourself with discretion. By no means upbraid him, nor suffer jealousy to take possession of your breast. If you once admit this passion, it may terminate in your ruin. It will lead you to consider every seeming inattention, as a proof of his want of affection. You will conclude, *he is tired of his toy and is looking out for another*. This thought once admitted, will have an infatuating influence over your mind. Not only your actions will express your suspicion, but you will unguardedly speak it out, perhaps in terms of reproach.—Your good husband, stabbed to the very heart, may possibly with eyes full of tears clasp you in his arms and assure you of his love. But all will be in vain, jealousy once admitted contaminates the soul. He will scarcely turn his back, before the old impression will revive.

His tears and entreaties will be considered as evidence of his guilt, and you will wretchedly settle upon this conclusion. "*I am disagreeable, he is gone to carress the happy fair one whose company is preferred.*"

6. As you regard your own bliss, speedily check all thoughts of this kind, as soon as they arise in your mind. If indulged, they will have a bainful effect upon your temper, and spread a gloom over your countenance, so as to strip you of every charm. Your husband repelled from time to time, will at length become indifferent, and leaving you to languish in your distress, he will seek for amusement where it may be found. And thus you will bring upon yourself the very evil, against which you would make your mistaken defence.
7. If you have already proved the truth of these reflections by sad experience, I know you are ready to excuse yourself, because the whole proceeded from the most sincere affection. But you should consider that the anxiety and distress which are often depicted in your countenance, might with equal propriety, lead your companion to doubt the sincerity of your love. And for any thing you know to the contrary, a suspicion of this kind is at the bottom of the whole mischief. Do not act like stubborn children, rejecting that happiness which is entirely in your own power.
8. If he do not come in, the very hour or day that you expect him, instead of accusing him with neglect, be the considerate woman, and take into view the various and unavoidable delays with

which he must meet in transacting his business. And be assured, for I speak from experience, that in many instances he sacrifices his most sincere wishes to be with you, for what he considers necessary for the present. He is bound to provide for you and your children. In easy circumstances there is most satisfaction, and he feels a strong desire to secure this foundation for your future happiness. Receive him then with gladness as often as he comes in, shew him that you are happy in his company, and let the preparations made for his reception, prove to him, that he holds a considerable share in your thoughts and affections when he is absent. Such conduct will endear you to his heart, and secure to you all the attention and regard you so ardently desire.

9. Do not suppose, that my plan implies that the husband has nothing to do. So far from this he is bound “To love and cherish his wife, as his own flesh.” But I repeat it, this obligation seems in a great degree, to rest on the condition of a loving and cheerful submission on the part of the wife. Here again perhaps you object and say, “Why not the husband, first shew a little condescension as well as the wife?” I answer for these plain reasons. It is not his disposition; it is not the custom but with the hen-pecked; it is not his duty; it is not implied in the marriage contract; it is not required by law or gospel.
10. I presume you are not one of those ladies who indulge a mean opinion of their companions, and are indeed ashamed of them. This can happen in no case where there is not a want of information and judgment. If you stooped in marrying him, do not indulge the thought, that you added to his respectability. Never tell him “you lifted him out of the ashes.” For it will be hard for you to extricate yourself from this difficulty. “If you stooped of necessity, because you could get no one else, the obligation is on your own side. If you stooped of choice, who ought to be blamed but yourself? Besides it will be well to remember that when you become his wife, he became your head, and your supposed superiority was buried in that voluntary act.*

* Open quotation mark at beginning of sentence in original.