

They did not know that an engagement to marry is made but to be sundered if need be; it is but a trial trip before setting out on the unreturning voyage. So far from being binding it should yield to a word, to a wish, to a misgiving. Marriage alone is insoluble and to keep it so it is desirable that every engagement made before marriage should be as light as possible. But the fetters were forged which rivetted them to wretchedness, and obedient to the coarse commercial standard of his day and place Edward Irving turned aside from the woman he loved and perjured himself to one whom he did not love, and who was base enough to demand marriage in fulfilment of a contract.

It was at this time that Carlyle appeared upon the scene—a misanthrope, a grumbler, a man of unbounded selfishness and egotism; but also of unswerving honesty and of talents too widely known to need comment upon. Devoted to literature, and conscious of his own abilities he considered that he had work to do in the world, he felt himself to be a man with a mission. At that time he had made but little progress with it, hampered by poverty and oppressed by the weight of evils, in great part the imaginings of his own discontented spirit. But he was persuaded that from the day he should marry that the nightmare, physical and moral which haunted him would vanish; that he would enter a new man upon a new life. Jane Welsh was well provided with this world's goods. He sought her with the tenacity of his peasant race. Though rebuffed, he persisted. First he dazzled her eyes with the glamor of an association of intellectuals and through it essayed to touch her heart.

Jane did not easily yield. She was not so blind as not to perceive the disparity between his worldly position and her own, nor the many qualities which rendered him far from desirable for a husband. Few men would have persisted in what was apparently so hopeless a cause, but it was not love but a wife that Carlyle wanted. He did persist and he got one.

It would be hard to imagine a greater contrast to Irving than was Carlyle, both in looks and in character. How could a woman who had loved one of these men transfer her affections to the other? Jane Welsh took a great interest in this cynical school-master. She saw before any one else suspected it that the ill-favoured youth would be a great man and she resolved to have an influence upon his destiny; nevertheless, it was not by marriage that she proposed to accomplish it. However fond of him she afterwards became—and we see many similar marriages—Carlyle could not in any way be called her second love. His resplendent intellect won her homage, his marked individuality piqued her somewhat flagging interest in life; little by little she was attracted towards him by the force of a powerful will, by admiration of his genius, by a touch of vanity and ambition not inexcusable in so young a woman, but *never by love*.

Carlyle established in his household a rule which rendered his wife but little better than a door-keeper—a menial. The slightest noise, the least worriment put his ideas to flight and rendered him incapable of working for several days. The measures which he took to obtain the desired quiet were at least effectual; he kept alone day and night in his study and when

taking exercise. "Few visitors or none," had been his warning to his wife before their marriage. Not only did he want quiet in the house but out of doors; one of Mrs. Carlyle's chief occupations was to procure by persuasion or as best possible the "removal" of all the chickens, parrots, dogs, cats, etc., whose unlucky stars had brought them within the neighborhood of her husband. It was no longer a case of association of intellectuals. She whose early ambition had been to become a novelist and whose talents not less than her industry would have admirably fitted her for that rôle, soon found that she had a very different place to fill. With keen wit, sound judgment, honest purpose, and a command of language at once figurative and forcible anything written by her could not fail to be entertaining and beneficial. Had Carlyle encouraged instead of discouraged his wife in this direction we should have had a double reason for gratitude to him. But it was for him to write and study, for her to work and scrub. It seemed to him in the order of nature that she should make his bread and mend his boots; men should have intellectual employment, women servile. Mrs. Carlyle accepted the division and disregarding the luxury to which she had been accustomed endeavored to realize his ideal of a wife. While he was working at his literary productions she did the household work, swept, cooked, baked, was tailor, carpenter, washerwoman, all to perfection, and without complaint. She ruined her health, but her grace and delicacy were never marred by the contact with grosser things and persons in which she was abased. Neither did she murmur when poverty and ill-health overtook her. She had resolved to be a meek-tempered wife, and she was also determined that whatever happened her husband should never write for money, and she kept her word.

It cannot be expected that a woman should be happy in such a state of affairs. Certain philosophers say that true happiness consists in doing good to others. A man lost on a desert, parched with thirst, who gives his last drop of water to a wounded comrade may well feel a noble satisfaction in having accomplished his duty; but to believe that he enjoys seeing another drink his water is an error. She knew this—she, who for years had given her life to him, who had never even said "thank you." She rejoiced profoundly in his success, to which her resolution and unflinching service had largely contributed—and a share of whose glories fell over her; she bore with his ill-humors—but she was not happy.

But if the first eighteen months of Mrs. Carlyle's married life was an awakening, there were severer trials yet in store for her. They had a pleasant circle of friends in Edinburgh, not large but among the intellectual and literary people of the city; but a demon of unrest seemed to possess her husband and in spite of her ill health, the protests of his friends and his own desires, this lovely and delicate woman was forced from the cheerful and distinguished society which her presence attracted there to be buried for seven years in the sour solitudes of a Scottish moorland—Craigenputtock. Is not the name enough to condemn the place? London life must have been welcome indeed after this and the little house in which they established