

PART II

LOVE, COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

CHAPTER IV

QUALIFICATIONS FOR MARRIED LIFE

“**A**LL mankind loves a lover,” says Emerson; and it would be difficult to name three subjects more generally thought about and speculated upon than Courtship, Love and Wedlock. Like the three-leaf clover, they spring from a single stem, and, like the clover, should bring forth blossom and fruit. With Tennyson we may say:

“’Tis better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all.”

LOVE AND MARRIAGE NATURAL

“God created male and female. Male and female created he them.” The double clause is too significant to be overlooked. Each is a counterpart of the other—something not complete without the two. Anything so divinely appointed as marriage coming to us from Eden should be looked upon as one of the most sacred things of earth.

Love blends young hearts in blissful unity, and, for the time, so ignores past ties and affections, as to make willing separation of the son from his father’s house, and the daughter from all the sweet endearments of her childhood’s home, to go out together, and rear for themselves an altar, around which shall cluster all the cares and delights, the anxieties and sympathies of the family relationship; this love, if pure, unselfish and discreet constitutes the chief usefulness and happiness of human life. Without it there would be no organized households, and, consequently, none of that earnest endeavor for competence and respectability which is the main-spring to human effort; none of those sweet, softening, restraining and elevating influences of domestic life which can alone fill the earth with glory.