

regard every other tie of love and duty. Such a woman perhaps sports with the misery she creates, and glories in it as a mark of her power over a man whom all her unkindness fails to alienate; and who may still continue true to his part of the engagement, from motives the most pure and praise-worthy.

Nor is the companion to this portrait less deserving our compassion; or (to the disgrace of the men be it spoken) less frequent. Here we shall see a mild and timorous female, unused to reproof, unhackneyed in the ways of the world, subject to the brutal ferocity, the unfeeling haughtiness, of some tyrannic lord and master; who, far from considering her as his equal, his dearest and best half, the confidential friend of his bosom, and the sacred repository of his nearest concerns, looks on her only as a slave, destined to obey his will and tremble at his nod; or perhaps as the mere vehicle by which his name and family are to be continued—the subject of his sensual pleasure and his capricious endearments, at those hours when he is tired of gaming, drinking, or other vicious though fashionable amusements.

If this be, as unhappily it is, the situation of many in the married state, it may be worth while enquiring from whence these evils spring; which indeed, threaten to put an end to the institution itself, or at least to destroy all hopes of happiness in it, in the eyes of every reasoning person of either sex.

With respect to the men, when we see how early boys are introduced into public life, and suffered to be witnesses of scenes 'which shame the conscious cheek of truth'—when we reflect to what language they are daily and hourly permitted to listen—when we see the state of youth entirely blotted out from the book of fashionable life, and the school boy suddenly start up into man—when vice is known before it can be practised—Are we any longer to wonder at the excesses into which they are carried headlong?—And when the bloom of virtue is destroyed, and debauchery has obtained complete possession both of his mind and person, rendering them equally disgusting to the eye and the heart of female delicacy, if at last, by the mediation and importunity of friends and relations, and by the hypocrisy of a few weeks, he obtains the hand of a virtuous woman in marriage—what must be expected to be the result, but distaste and disgust? And this will be resented by the offender with all that malignity which the vicious ever bear toward those they have injured.

As to the female sex, I wish to deliver my sentiments in a gentler way; and yet there are surely faults on their sides, which will not yield to gentle medicines. Among these stand foremost, as the leaders of those bands most hostile to connubial felicity, pride and affectation—A pride which induces them to consider themselves as degraded, by doing their duty—which looks on every concession made to their husbands as unbecoming a woman of spirit; the most dangerous, and let them forgive me when I add, the most detestable character, when carried to its full extent, ever assumed by those who were 'framed for the tender offices of love'—a pride which blinds them to their own defects, and emblazons their excellencies beyond even the flatteries of a lover—an affectation, which prevents them from acknowledging what they feel, and introduces a caprice destructive of their own and their husband's peace.—I will proceed no farther in this unpleasant description.

In addition to these failings, peculiar to each sex, ought to be mentioned—the thoughtless indifference with which this most awful engagement is entered into by the young, the old, and the middle aged—the utter ignorance before hand of what they are about to do—the inattention at the time as to what they are doing—and the forgetfulness, afterward, of what they have done.

For better for worse; for richer for poorer; in sickness and in health; till death us do part! Do these words mean any thing? And how are they consistent with separate maintenance, separate beds, separate pleasures, and that great root of all evils, divorces? If people come together with an intention, or even a consciousness of the possibility (not to say the probability) of violating every condition on which they are joined, except those contained in the marriage settlement, the performance of which may be compelled by law; it would be better at once to omit trifling with what is by some religions esteemed a sacrament, and to depend wholly on the Indenture Tripartite.

I know it is often alledged, by both parties, that the temper and disposition of the other are so bad, they cannot be borne with; and that it is better to part than to live in perpetual quarrels and uneasiness. But whence does this complaint arise? From hypocrisy before marriage, and want of patience and tenderness afterward. Let but every married person, husbands as well as wives, keep in mind one single maxim, and I will venture to insure an end to at least two thirds of the quarrels which arise between them. This maxim,