

vows of the marriage contract enforced in their true spirit.

It is not fair to compare the marriage contract with an ordinary mercantile contract. The Courts have quite rightly refrained from releasing the parties to a marriage contract on the same terms as they would release the parties to a civil contract. A very slight breach of the latter will render it voidable; but it is not in the interest of public morals that the marriage contract should be treated in any such manner. There is no doubt, truth in the statement: "The general happiness of the married life is secured by its indissolubility. When people understand that they must live together except for a very few reasons known to the law, they learn to soften by mutual accommodation that yoke which they know they cannot shake off. They become good husbands and good wives, from the necessity of remaining husbands and wives; for necessity is a powerful master in teaching the duties which it imposes." But the truth of this statement applies largely to the less fundamental difficulties of married life and to those cases where there is a mutual desire begot of good breeding to overcome difficulties. However, a great many married people do not overcome the difficulties and do not become good husbands and good wives, yet they may not be guilty of improper conduct in the eyes of the law. Under the present conditions of the law, the wife suffers the whole burden.

The situation is this: If the wife has a violent temper or a mean disposition, she may make her husband's life very unhappy; but he can always find relief in distance. True, he must still support his wife, but he is bound to do that whether he lives with her or not. He may have suffered the loss of her society, but after all in such a case the loss would be a gain. The converse case is very different. If the husband is the one of violent temper and mean disposition, he may submit his wife to all the tortures known to unhappy wives. "The husband may subject his wife daily and even hourly to such treatment as makes her life a veritable hell upon earth and she is without remedy if she is robust