

Hasty Marriages and Their Cure.

A nineteen-year-old brakeman upon one of the railroads which meandered through the sandy plains of Long Island took it into his head last December to make himself a Christmas present of a wife. No sooner was the idea conceived in his brain than he hastened to put it into execution. Looking around among the pretty girls of his acquaintance, his fancy at last settled upon a comely damsel some months his junior, who at once signified her assent to the proposed alliance. On Christmas Day the pair were married, with the usual accompaniment of cake, congratulations and kisses. No couple were happier in their honeymoon than this youthful husband and wife, but unfortunately the billing and cooing did not last. As the spring drew on, the young man's thoughts lightly turned to other fields of pleasure than domestic life afforded, and he began to make excuses for frequent absence from home. Finally, in the first week of summer, he took up his abode permanently at a distance from his wife and neglected her company altogether. Being a woman of spirit, his mate did not pine in secret for him, after the approved fashion of romance, but systematically hunted him down and had him arrested. To jail he went ignominiously, and when asked his excuse for his cruel abandonment of the young wife he had sworn to love and cherish forever, he replied that he wanted to save money, so as to buy a new suit of clothes for himself. Instead of reckoning the cost of matrimony beforehand, and counting the number of surplus garments he would have to dispense with in order to provide food and raiment for his family, the impetuous bridegroom had put his head into the matrimonial noose without any forethought for the future and without any idea of abandoning his accustomed bachelor luxuries. Awakened to the realities of married life, it never seemed to occur to him that he had promised to dispense with all personal comforts sooner than lose his wife, but his first thought seemed to be that the wife was the luxury to be cut off and the new suit of clothes an indispensable necessity to his happiness. Probably there could not be found a better illustration of the folly of hasty and improvident matches. By his own showing the young man was in no pecuniary condition to take upon himself the charge of a wife, and certainly he had no adequate idea of his responsibilities. Had it been possible to make him prove in advance his ability and entire readiness to support a wife, by placing at her disposal a portion of his pay, the unpleasant spectacle of a wife cast away by her husband of six months would have been avoided. What the law cannot do, however, the young woman who was asked to become a wife should have done. The case that is quoted is only one of many of its kind. Hasty marriages between people who know nothing of one another, either of their real disposition or of their pecuniary abilities, are of every day occurrence, and the majority of them end badly. The remedy lies in the hands of the women themselves. They have the final word to say that settles the proposed partnership. It is a comparatively easy matter in most cases to discover whether the man who proposes matrimony to them is worthy their love and confidence, and they would find that they would lose nothing in the estimation of the world if they promptly refused to throw themselves into the arms of the first comer, but held themselves at a high price in the market. That so much misery exists in the married state is too often the fault of headless girls and head-strong women, who hold themselves all too cheaply at the matrimonial net of the first suitor.

How to Keep a Wife Young.

You have won a beautiful young bride, with a light heart, rosy cheeks, a neatly moulded form, graceful, healthy and happy. Now, you cannot stay the lapse of time. You wife, like yourself, will grow old in years. But the light heart, the rosy cheeks, the health and happiness, which make even old people feel young and appear young, are largely in your keeping. You can mar them by neglect, or preserve them by love and devotion. True love for a wife extends to everything. It manifests itself in the most delicate attention to her comfort and feelings; in consulting her tastes; in concealing her failings; in never doing anything to degrade her, but everything to exalt her before her children and servants; in acknowledging her excellencies, and commending her efforts to please you; in meeting and even anticipating all her reasonable wants; in doing all that love can do for her welfare and happiness.

Never cease to be a lover, or fail to bestow any of those assiduous attentions, and tender expressions which marked your intercourse before marriage. All the respectful deference and self-sacrificing devotion that can be claimed by the sweetheart, is certainly due to the wife, and no true husband will habitually withhold them. Let no unkind word or seeming indifference remind her sadly of the days of courtship, or cause her to regret the day when she left parents, brothers and sisters for you. When you come home at night, bring her the news of the day; the latest, freshest thought, and in selecting your reading-matter, get what suits her tastes and needs.

The chosen companion of your life, the mother of your children, the sharer of your joys and sorrows, deserves the highest place in your affections; the best place everywhere; the softest, kindest words, the most tender care and truest devotion. These will make her a contented wife and loving companion, vivacious and abounding in a healthy state of vitality that will bless and cheer the family circle, make her the angel of the household, and the helpmate of her husband in the truest sense, instead of the weary broken-down invalid we so often meet.

Love and appreciation are to a woman what dew and sunshine are to flowers. They refresh and brighten her whole life. They make her strong-hearted and keen-sighted in everything affecting the welfare of her home. They give her courage to tread life's pathway, and light to discern its issues. Remember that your wife is "God's best gift, and her prayers the ablest advocate of Heaven's blessings." Let her know that you love her, are proud of her, and believe in her, that her face to you at least is the fairest face in the world; let her voice be your sweetest music; her kiss the guardian of your innocence; her arm the pale of your safety; her lips your faithful counsellor, and her smiles your brightest day. Let her life be pervaded with such an influence, and she will never grow old to you, but will blossom and sweeten and brighten in perpetual youth; and, through the march of years, and the wrinkles of time, you will always see the face you have loved and won.—*Edward P. Jones, in the Matrimonial Review.*

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