

**"Faith is a Higher Faculty than Reason."**

BY MRS. D. HARRY PRIME.

[Two lovely children residing with their parents in Pennsylvania were enjoying the leisure hours after their school tasks in out-door play, when they espied an old oak chest in an outhouse and stepped into it. The lid of the chest fell and the spring-bolt locked them in. They were missed by their mother some time after and search made. Upon passing the chest and hearing a stifled groan, she opened it and found them gasping for air. The brother had attempted to cut off the hinges with his penknife, but failing, hopefully prayed until his mother found them.]

'T WAS noon—past noon!  
And the dull tasks that tired the brain  
Are thrown aside, and little May  
And Willie, now for hours again  
In the glad freedom of their play  
Are wild with joy.

Loud rings out the gushing peals  
Of laughter, dainty feet  
Are fleet in flight. Who steals  
Upon their steps and touches cheek  
And lip with witching grace,  
Till dimpled features glow  
And wears the cherub face  
Health's flush? 'T is Hygeia, we know.

"Come, Will!"  
The little maiden laughing cries;  
"See that old chest? now, I mean  
To have it for my 'house'!" She flies,  
With Willie on her steps. A scream!  
They're both shut in!

"Oh, brother! we'll die! for none  
Will know that we are here."  
"Nay, sister, there is One,  
Our Father! know you not he's near?  
He will our mother send  
To lift the lid. Let's pray:  
Our Father! wilt thou lend  
Thy mercy? for we've gone astray!"

His little knife  
He grasps; the dainty blade meets  
But the unyielding oak!  
His heart more fearful beats;  
Till rosy Faith his trust awoke:  
"Mother will come!"

The long bright day draws on apace.  
"Where are my little pets?"  
The mother calls, seeks every place,  
And in her fears forgets  
All else. She nears the chest;  
A moaning sound comes feebly up  
From out the prison nest—  
In mercy, Thou hast spared the cup!

**Choosing a Wife.**

BY ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH.

NO man or woman enters into the holy and beautiful relation of marriage without the expectation of being made happier thereby. Two persons thus conjoined ought to be of mutual help and comfort; smoothing for each the rough places of life; aiding in moral and intellectual growth; each loving, honoring, and ennobling the other. The two thus allied in a true and honorable relation will encounter the natural sorrows incident to our sublunary state, but will be shielded, as it were, from the great shocks of adversity, and the temptations which beset and overpower those less happily situated. Swedenborg uses the term *conjugal* rather than *conjugal* as designating the true marriage, and affirms that such persons are especially pleasing in the sight of the great Creator; that they enter into a state of peculiar beatitude after death, growing younger through the eternities, and being the most beautiful of all the angels, because of the sacredness of this mystical marriage.

It is most certain that men and women are made happier and better by marriage, or they are exasperated, and rendered miserable and vicious by it; for we all know that contact with some persons evolves all that is sweetest and best in ourselves, while that of others calls into life all that is evil and discordant. Such being the fact, persons about to take the marriage vow upon themselves would do well to learn first whether they have any real vocation for the state, and whether they have that within themselves calculated to enhance their own happiness or that of another by so doing.

A man should look to it well and ascertain whether he is not essentially a bachelor in character—good and pleasant and companionable, in society, with a substratum of selfishness inaccordant with that self-abnegation essential to the cordial, cheerful helpfulness required in a family man.

A marrying man must be one who has a manly protectiveness about him; who enjoys the enjoyments of others; who will go out of his way to promote the well-being of others; who understands a woman in her highest, purest, and tenderest characteristics. Whatever may be his knowledge of the world he must be uncorrupted by it. He must winnow all the chambers of his soul and be sure that nothing unwholesome is harbored there; no secret vice, no sheltered and pernicious habit to

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at some time come forth, like a loathsome reptile, and strike the dear, trusting denizens of home with sorrow, dread, or aversion. There is no help for the miseries that may lurk under the family altar; therefore, men and women should take these things to heart before it is too late.

Queen Elizabeth at one time certainly entertained the idea of espousing the Duke of Anjou, and as he had but lately recovered from the smallpox, she enjoined upon her Minister Walsingham "to observe the person of the Prince, and consider whether he retained so much of his good looks as that a woman could fix her affections upon him."

I give this fact as an intimation that women as well as men regard "good looks" as essential, though Love, being a royal giver, will sometimes endow the poorest.

No man should assume the relation of marriage, with its many contingencies, unless his habits of life, profession, trade, or general business capacity are sufficient to guarantee a comfortable support to a household. It is the height of selfishness, meanness, and cruelty, to take a woman to be only a partaker of your poverty. If you love her, even, you will not do this. Marriage with cold rooms and a scanty larder does not enhance the happiness of its participants.

Supposing the man mentally, morally, and personally adapted to marriage, having insured a competence, he is in a condition to choose a wife.

Let him by no means choose a woman of genius. Such fine porcelain is not for everyday use. Scarcely should a man of genius ally himself to genius; and no other man, unless he be of the largest, most generous, and most manful characteristics, and willing also to be neutralized himself, should dare appropriate these fine, rare creatures so hard to be understood and so multifarious in design. Browning, a robust, wholesome man of power, was a fit husband for the sensitive Elizabeth Barrett, but as a rule the experiment of such alliances is a hazardous one.

He who would reduce a woman of genius to a mere household appendage does her a great wrong, and is guilty of meanness and injustice. Let a man choose

"A creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food;  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles."

While he should not presumptuously, and with a poor unmanly vanity select a woman of

genius to be the presiding good of his household, let him by no means commit the more dangerous and fatal mistake of marrying a flat, or simpleton. The latter class of women are harder to manage, and more deplorably unfit for the dignities of marriage, than the more affluently endowed. "There is no incompatibility like the incompatibility of mind and character," Dickens has said, and his child wife, with her prettiness, and childishness, and limitations, and unreasonableness, is an example.

Do not marry a sentimental woman, who is sure to run into the lackadaisical one; let her love sentiment, high, noble sentiment, but beware of the sentimental.

Do not marry one of the delicate, die-away women, who are sure to degenerate into invalids, and take a pride in their feebleness; recount their pains; and tell of the hazards they have run; sit all day in easy chairs, and lounge on sofas, and become at last a sort of forlornity; and having worn your patience quite out, will get up an *ill-used look*, and on the sly abuse you to their cronies. Heaven save you from a complaining, forlorn woman!

Do not marry a woman with thin lips and a glib tongue. She may be quite taking in the flush of youth, piquant and amusing while all is smooth and prosperous, and you rather tied to her apron strings; but woe to you if adversity come—woe to you, if you should thwart her mood, or presume upon dictation; that ready tongue of hers and sharp wit will work you discomfort; for from the first she had the premonitions of a shrew, and few men in our days have the nerve of Petruccio to quiet such feminine manifestations.

I am sure it is not wise to marry a woman of a different religious faith, nor one far removed from your own social rank; nor an ignorant woman, that is, one whose ignorance will annoy you. Many traits may seem harmless, and even engaging in youth, which in the long run will be very irksome if not distressing.

By no means marry any deformity, if congenital—it must and will be revolting to a healthful, esthetic mind, and will surely prove disastrous in a household. I knew a young clergyman who became much attached to an estimable girl to whom he was engaged to be married, when a wise friend told him of a defect, which the girl herself ought to have confessed before she became affianced to any man. She had a malformation of the foot. Learning this fact, the young man, after many conscientious scruples broke his contract of marriage, greatly to the displeasure of the lady's family,

and some detriment to himself in a professional point of view; one old divine asking him "if the soul of his wife was lodged in her foot," etc.

The young man was assuredly in the right. Dickens, who is a good teacher, gives us in the "Old Curiosity Shop" a pleasant picture of simple, unaffected goodness in the Abel family; but he tells of the father hobbling along with his club foot, full of kindly greetings, followed by his son, his very counterpart, even to the club foot. This is a drawback to the picture.

Beware of those thin-cheeked, blue-veined, narrow-chested girls, so much admired by sentimental writers, unless you would transform what ought to be a cheery household into a hospital. These unfortunate girls have the seeds of consumption in their veins, and will bring you nothing but sorrow. Beside this, disease may excite our pity and our sympathy, allied as it sometimes is to almost heavenly shades of character, but it should never be associated with marriage; indeed, to a person of a sound mind and healthful physique, it is most repugnant. All disease carries an offensive effluvia, detrimental to the health of others, and distasteful to a delicate sense.

Do not marry a girl who sits in the parlor and dresses like a fine lady while her mother works in the kitchen, for this implies a cold selfishness, that may be any thing but favorable to the peace and geniality of a household.

Nature strives, struggles for the beautiful, which is her end and aim, and her very heart is pained at her multitudinous defects in human beings who are inharmonious, as crooked in mind as body, sensual and depraved, because man does not study and does not obey the laws of life, which are as immutable as death, as unmistakable as light. There is a peculiar beauty and significance in the words of the sweet Psalmist of Israel, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

Only handsome men and women ought to marry. Those having a *mens sana in corpore sano*. Let others look the matter squarely in the face, and admit that their imbecilities, their diseases, their unhandsome looks, their discordant minds, ought not to be perpetuated; and let them go to work manfully to make the best of themselves by eschewing marriage. Let them be honest, hearty old maids and bachelors, earning money for the good of others, teaching and farming and helping on good and wholesome ideas. They will find a happiness in such career far superior to what would await them and theirs in the married relation.

The true, good, and handsome men and women adapted to marriage ought to be treated with distinguished honor in the world, as benefactors of the race, as foreshadowing that beautiful future when we shall be hardly lower than the angels and covered with glory and honor.

One reason why it is well to marry a pretty woman in preference to a plain one, is that the former is more free from jealousy and discontent than the latter. Being better satisfied with herself she is more likely to be pleased with others.

It is better to marry a full-sized woman than a little one, for the meanness of stature is apt to go through the character also. A certain roundness of contour; a composure and self-poise, devoid of heaviness or sluggishness; an elastic buoyancy, a bright uppish look, more of pride than vanity; a clear open eye, and pure, child-like smile; hands and feet well proportioned, not too small, are outlines easily discriminated and constitute a safe, reliable character. A cheerful woman, one who will not make mountains of mole-hills, who can find something bright and beautiful everywhere; who has pretty feminine resources, and knows how to devise ways and means to make others happy and content about her, is a jewel of inestimable worth.

The voice (not for singing) is a great indicator of character. Swedenborg says the angels know the state of a man by his voice. Beware of those high, sharp tones of voice, as well as the too low and hesitating; the first belongs to a shrew, and the last to deceit and imbecility.

Cheerfulness of temper, candor that rejects every species of falsehood, and owns to the truth at any peril; tenderness to be detected by a fondness for and faithful care of *pets*, rather than by outward expressions; purity, instinct in thought and action; intelligence to appreciate all that is noble and good; and health, sound and elastic, are traits to insure duty as a wife and happiness in a household.

#### ANY EXCUSE IS BETTER THAN NONE.—

An Irishman, having accidentally broken a pane of glass in a window, was making the best of his way to get out of sight as well as mind; but unfortunately for Pat, the proprietor stole a march on him, and having seized him by the collar, exclaimed:

"You broke my window, fellow, did you not?"

"To be sure I did," said Pat; "and didn't you see me running home for money to pay for it?"