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SEXUALITY AND GENDER IN THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE

AN ANNOTATED EDITION OF CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTS

EDITED BY
LLOYD DAVIS

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Protestantism instituted a major revision in the cultural valuing of marriage. Rather than celibacy, "the married state now became the ethical norm for the virtuous Christian" (Stone 135), replacing any idealization of unmarried chastity "with the glorification of marriage" (Rose 3). In addition, a "heavy responsibility [was] placed by Protestantism upon the head of the household to supervise the religious and moral conduct of its members" (Stone 154). On the other side, it is claimed that the Reformation was not a change but "a phase of intensified effort in a long struggle to inculcate Christian beliefs and attitudes," and that "heads of families on both sides of the religious divide found themselves confronted by the religious dissidence of wives and children" (Houlbrooke 31). It is also argued that the driving force behind developments was not Protestantism but "a common European heritage of Christian humanist thought and scholarship" (O'Day 39). One indisputable change, however, was in the source of orthodox advice on marriage and the family: "in the past, counsel on marital and domestic matters had been dispensed within the pastoral and penitential office by celibate priests. Now advice was given by preachers who were themselves family men, typically in sermons preached at weddings" (Collinson, *Birthpangs* 68).

Cleaver's *Godly Form* is one of the major conduct books of the period. Its structure and contents are outlined on the title page: the duties of husband to wife and wife to husband (from which the following extracts are taken); parental duties to children and children's duties to parents; masters' duties to servants and servants' to masters. The emphasis in the sub-title is noteworthy, "For the Ordering of Private Families." As in Fenner's *Order of Household*, the notion of order is used intellectually and ethically, as a means of structuring the household (along with texts on the household) and organizing the kind of structure it is to have, one based on authority and hierarchy. Whereas the husband's duties derive from affection and rule, the wife's are based on subjection and submission. Here, as in similar guides, "women are urged not merely to chastity, obedience, and silence; they are admonished to repress even gestures and facial expressions, any visual sign of opposition to their husbands" (Newman 9).

Cleaver's date of birth is uncertain. He was a Puritan divine and a member of a group of Puritan preachers based in the town of Banbury, itself "a byword for Puritanism" (Collinson, *Godly People* 484). In his play *Bartholomew Fair*, Ben Jonson's caricatured Puritan divine, Zeal-of-the-land Busy, is described as a "Banbury man." Many of these preachers presented views which contradicted official church doctrine. Cleaver was suspended from preaching at one point and had to take refuge in Northamptonshire, a county where Puritanism had become strongly established in the Elizabethan period. Eventually he was removed from his position as rector of Drayton in 1606 and died three years later.

Works written by the Banbury preachers were popular and sold widely. The preachers published prolifically, the texts usually being based on sermons that had been well-received. It seems that there was a degree of collaboration, even rivalry, among the preachers which spurred on their productivity; historian Patrick Collinson writes of "the mutual pressures of a fraternity" and a "benevolent pressure to publish" (*Godly People* 496). Cleaver published numerous texts, largely comprising sermons and pamphlets on religious topics such as the sabbath and infant baptism. He collaborated extensively with another, more famous "Banbury man," John Dod (1549-1645). Indeed, they were "the most successful co-authors of the century" (Collinson, *Godly People* 496), with their best-known work (apart from the revised version of *Godly Form*) being a commentary and explication of the Ten Commandments. As noted above, *A Godly Form of Household Government* was republished nine times. The following extracts are taken from the second edition which, like the first, was published in London in 1598 (STC 5383; Reel 317).

A GODLY FORM OF HOUSEHOLD GOVERNMENT

The Duty of the Husband towards His Wife

This duty consisteth severally in these three points. First, that he live with his wife discreetly, according unto knowledge. Secondly, that he be not bitter, fierce, and cruel unto her. Thirdly, that he love, cherish, and nourish his wife even as his own body, and as Christ loved his Church and gave himself for it to sanctify it. But before we shall speak of these three points we will a little touch the original and beginning of holy Wedlock: what it is, when, where, how, and of whom it was instituted and ordained.

Wedlock or Matrimony is a lawful knot, and unto God an acceptable yoking and joining together of one man and one woman with the good consent of them both (Matt. 19.5-6, Gen. 1.27, 1 Cor. 6.16, Ephes. 5.31, Prov. 5.18-20). To the end that they may dwell together in friendship and honesty, one helping and comforting, the other eschewing whoredom and all uncleanness, bringing up their children in the fear of God. Or, it is a coupling together of two persons into one flesh, not to be broken according unto the ordinance of God, so to continue during the life of either of them (Gen. 2.24, Mal. 2.14, Rom. 7.3).

By yoking, joining, or coupling is meant not only outward dwelling together of the married folks, as to be ordinarily in a dwelling place for the better performance of each other's mutual duties (Matt. 1.18, 1 Cor. 7.10-13, 1 Pet. 3.7, Ruth 4.11-12), but also a uniform agreement of mind and a common participation of body and goods. For as much as the Lord saith that "they two shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2.24), that is, one body, this is to be remembered, that Matrimony or Wedlock must not only be a coupling

together but also it must be such a coupling together as cometh of God and is not contrary to his word and will. For there be some marriages made whom God coupleth not together but carnal lust, beauty, riches, goods and lands, flattery and friendship. In such marriages God is not thought upon, and therefore they sin the more against him.

These and such like marriages be disliked and condemned in the Scripture (Gen. 6.12, Ezek. 10.1ff., Matt. 24.38-39). God did appoint and ordain Matrimony himself in Paradise, so that he is the author of the same (Gen. 2.20). Yea, and our Saviour Christ himself who, being the very natural son of God, was born in wedlock, although of a pure virgin, did honor and commend Matrimony while he did vouchsafe to show his first miracle at a marriage (John 2.1). Whereby he did declare that the Lord is able to make the bitterness of marriage sweet and the scarcity thereof to abound with plenty. And the Apostle giveth this excellent title to marriage, saying that it is "Honorable among all" (Heb. 13.4), that is, among all estates and all nations. The institution of Matrimony is an indissoluble bond and knot, whereby the husband and wife are fastened together by the ordinance of God, and is straighter than any other conjunction in the society of mankind.¹ Inasmuch that it is a less offence to forsake father and mother and to leave them sorrowless (which, notwithstanding, ought by God's commandment to be honored), than it is to do the like toward his lawful married wife. Wherefore, let them look well what they do that are ready for light and small causes to separate man and wife, seeing that Christ himself saith that whosoever is separated from his wife saving for whoredom and marieth another committeth adultery (Matt. 19.9).

This is a thing worthy to be remembered, both on the behalf of the Sutor and Wooper, as also on her part that is wooed. Namely, that they deal plainly and faithfully one with the other and not guilefully and craftily go about to deceive one the other in body or goods. For so doing, they shall never use one the other so lovingly and commodiously as they hoped and desired they might, when the one hath fraudulently and deceitfully enticed and beguiled the other either in body or substance. For naturally we hate him or her that doth beguile us. Neither is there anything that displeaseth a man or woman more than to lack and fail of the thing they both hoped and looked for. And therefore it were convenient and also much better that both parties should disclose the one to the other such imperfections, infirmities, and wants in either of their bodies, as also the mediocrity and meanness of their goods and substance as in truth it is. Yea, though it should be with the peril and loss one of the other, rather than the one to obtain and get the other with fraud, guile, and discord.

But before we shall come to speak of the causes of marriage, we purpose (God so willing) briefly to show how everyone that intendeth to marry should choose him a meet, fit, and honest mate (Gen. 2.18). For

there lieth much weight in the wise election and choice of a wife. As he that will plant anything doth first consider the nature of the ground in the which he mindeth to plant, even so much more ought a man to have respect to the condition of the woman out of whom he desireth to plant children, the fruits of honesty and welfare.

The first thing that is to be remembered of such a one as mindeth to marry is that he do not choose his wife within such degrees of consanguinity and affinity as are by God's law forbidden (Levit. 18.6ff). Secondly, Religion and faith must be considered, lest he make divorce of the true faith or bring it into peril (Deut. 7.3). For although he think himself as wise as Solomon (1 Kings 11.4) and as strong as Samson (Judges 16.17-18), yet may he be overcome as they were. Therefore, great advisement beforehand is to be taken on this behalf, lest afterwards with much grief and sorrow of heart he do too late repent.

Now, if any that hath matched himself with a wife that is an infidel, irreligious, or of a corrupt religion, and would put her away for this matter, herein he deceiveth himself as the Apostle manifestly proveth (1 Cor. 7.12ff.). For we must put a difference between that marriage that is made and done already and it that is yet to do (1 Pet. 3.1). Wherefore he that is snared and matched with such a wife as is either froward, wayward, or else is poisoned with superstition and popery, in such a case he must call upon God and live in his fear, in faithfulness, in patience, and with discretion and godly counsel labor to win her from the same. For like as that Husbandman doth with great labor and diligence till that ground which he hath once taken to farm although it be never so full of faults, as if it be dry if it bring forth weeds, brambles, or briars, or though the same ground cannot bear much wet, yet through good husbandry he winneth fruit thereof. Even so, in like manner, he that hath married a wife that is irreligious or froward, if he shall use like diligence to instruct and order her mind, if he diligently and courteously apply himself to weed out by little and little the noisome weeds out of her mind, both by wholesome and godly precepts and by Christian conversation, it cannot be but in time he shall feel the pleasant fruit thereof to both their comforts. For as it is commonly said, a good Jack maketh a good Jill.² Everyone, therefore, that purposeth to marry ought also to remember that there be three manner of riches in man: 1. the riches of the mind; 2. the riches of the body; 3. the riches of temporal substance. The best and the most precious are the riches of the mind, as without which the other two are more hurtful than profitable.

The riches of the mind are the fear of God, faith, God's glory, knowledge of his will, soberness, liberality, chastity, silence, humbleness, honesty, and such like virtues. These virtues lie not still, neither hide themselves wheresoever they be, but will break out divers ways so that they may well be spied and discerned. As a traveler hath marks in his way that

he may proceed aright, so likewise the man or woman that intendeth to marry have also marks in their ways by which they may make a right choice. There be certain signs of this fitness and godliness both in the man and in the woman. So that if the man be desirous to know a godly woman, or the woman would know who is a godly man, then let them observe and mark these six points: 1. the report; 2. the looks; 3. the speech; 4. the apparel; 5. the companions; 6. and lastly, the education and bringing up, which are like the pulses that show whether a man be sick or whole, well or ill.

1. The report, name, or fame he or she hath had and yet have, and what opinion honest folks have of them. Because as the market goeth, so the market-men will talk. A good man and a good woman commonly have a good name, because a good name is one of the blessings which God promiseth to good men and good women (Prov. 10.7 and 22.1, Ps. 112.6). But a good name is not to be praised from the wicked, and therefore our Saviour Christ saith, "Woe be to you when all men speak well of you" (Luke 6.26), that is, when evil men praise and commend you. For that is a plain argument that you are ambitious, vainglorious, and of the world, "For the world liketh and praiseth her own" (John 15.19). Nevertheless, it is convenient that every Christian should so live in the world that, though he cannot say as Christ said, "Which of you can rebuke me of sin?" (John 8.46), yet in truth he with a good conscience may boldly say, which of you can accuse me of lying, swearing, whoring, dissembling, dishonesty, deceit, covetousness, or such like. Which, though no man can clear himself in thought before God of these and other notorious vices, yet everyone before men should avouch it and approve it in their doings, and live so uprightly, holily, justly, and unblameably that none could justly charge them with any open sin (Luke 1.6 and 15, Job 1.1, 1 Thess. 2.10 and 3.13, Tit. 2.12, 1 Pet. 1.15).

2. The next sign is the look, for as Solomon saith, "The wisdom of a man doth make his face to shine" (Eccles. 8.1), that is, procureth him favor and good liking. So also godliness is in the face of a man or woman, and so likewise folly and wickedness may many times be seen and discerned by the face of a man or woman. And therefore it is said in Isaiah, "The trial of their countenance testifieth against them" (Isa. 3.9), as though their looks could speak. And therefore we read of proud looks and angry looks and wanton looks because they bewray pride and anger and wantonness. It is truly said that a modest man dwells at the sign of a modest countenance and an honest woman dwelleth at the sign of an honest face. Which may fitly be compared to the gate of the Temple that was called Beautiful, showing that if the entry be so beautiful, within is great beauty (Acts 3.2).

To show how a modest countenance and womanly shamefastness do commend a chaste wife, it is observed that the word *Nuptiae* which doth

declare the manner of her marriage. For it importeth a covering because virgins which should be married, when they came to their husbands, for modesty and shamefastness did cover their faces, as we read of Rebecca which, when she saw Isaac and knew that he should be her husband, she cast a veil before her face (Gen. 24.65), showing that modesty should be learned before marriage, which is the dowry that God addeth to her portion.

3. The third sign is her talk or speech or rather her silence. For a man or woman's talking is the mirror and messenger of the mind, in the which it may commonly be seen without in what case the man or woman is within, according to the common proverb, "Such as the man or woman is such is their talk." Now, silence is the best ornament of a woman, and therefore the law was given to the man rather than to the woman to show that he should be the teacher and she the hearer. And therefore she is commanded to learn of her husband (1 Cor. 14.34-35). As the Echo answereth but one word for many which are spoken to her, so a maid's answer should be in a word. For she which is full of talk is not likely to prove a quiet wife. The eye and the speech are as the Glasses of the mind, "For out of the abundance of the heart (saith our Saviour) the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12.34), as though by the speech we might know what aboundeth in the heart. And therefore he saith, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12.37). That is, thou shalt be justified to be wise or thou shalt be condemned to be foolish; thou shalt be justified to be sober or thou shalt be condemned to be rash; thou shalt be justified to be humble or thou shalt be condemned to be proud; thou shalt be justified to be loving or thou shalt be condemned to be envious. Therefore Solomon saith, "A Fool's lips are a snare to his own soul" (Prov. 18.7). Snares are made for other, but this snare catcheth a man's self because it bewrayeth his folly and causeth his trouble and bringeth him into discredit. Contrariwise, "The heart of the wise (saith Solomon) guideth his mouth wisely and the words of his mouth have grace" (Prov. 16.23).

Now, to show that this should be one mark in the choice of a wife, Solomon describing a right wife saith, "She openeth her mouth with wisdom and the law of grace is in her tongue" (Prov. 31.26), for that she delighteth to talk of the word of God. A wife that can speak this language is better than she which hath all the tongues. But as the open vessels were counted unclean (Num. 19.15), so also account that the open mouth hath much uncleanness.

4. The fourth sign is the apparel. For as the pride of the Glutton is noted in that he went in purple every day (Luke 16.19), so also the humility of John is noted in that he went in haircloth every day (Mark 1.6). For doubtless, by a man or a woman's apparel, excessive laughter, and going, they may partly be discerned of what disposition they are of. It is convenient that he that will be a suitor to a woman, that he mark what

apparel she customably useth to wear, whether it be vain, whorish, wanton, light, or comely, modest, and mannerly, and beseeming her estate and condition, to wit, honest and sober raiment. For apparel doth give often a certain and sure testimony of pride, lightness, wantonness, inconstancy, unshamefastness, filthiness, or uncleanness and other vices or virtues that be either in the man or the woman. For a modest man or woman are for the most part known by their sober attire, as the Prophet Elijah was known by his rough garment (2 Kings 1.8). So that we are to look for no better within than we see without, for everyone seemeth better than they be. If the face be vanity, the heart is pride. He that biddeth us abstain from the "show of evil" (1 Thess. 5.22) would have us to abstain from those means, husbands or wives, who have the shows of evil. For it is hard to come in the fashion and not to be in the abuse. And therefore the Apostle saith, "Fashion not yourselves like unto this world" (Rom. 12.2), as though the fashions of men did declare of what side they are.

5. The fifth sign is the company, by means whereof much may be perceived. For as whole and sound eyes with beholding and looking on sore eyes be annoyed and hurt, even so good and honest folks be often times stained and hurt with the company of the wicked and ungodly according to the common proverb: "Such like is everyone as the company is with whom they keep." For birds of a feather will hold together, and fellows in sin will be fellows in league, even as young Rehoboam chose young companions (1 Kings 12.8). The tame beast will not keep with the wild, nor the clean dwell with the leprous. If a man can be known by nothing else then he may be known by his companions. For like will to like, as Solomon saith; thieves call one another (Prov. 1.11 and 13.20). Therefore when David left iniquity he said, "Away from me all ye that work iniquity" (ps. 6.8), showing that a man never abandoneth evil until he abandon evil company. For no good is concluded in this Parliament. Therefore choose such a companion of thy life as hath chosen company like thee before. For they which did choose such as loved profane companions before in a short time were drawn to be profane too.³

6. The last sign is education, which giveth also great testimony. Namely, by whom and how everyone is brought up, whether the man or the woman were conversant among virtuous or vicious persons, and whether the parties have continued in the nurture of the virtuous and showed themselves obedient to them under whom they were brought up, or whether either of the parties have broken out of this discipline and followed his or her own willfulness. For it is a small matter for either of them to have dwelt among or with virtuous and religious folk. But rather herein lieth the force and weight: how far and how much either or both the parties have followed those and profited under them, and were dutiful and obedient unto them. For Judas was among and accompanied with the Apostles, brought up

certain years under Christ. But for all this he was never the better, for he left not his wicked pranks, neither was he obedient. Nevertheless, good education and discipline formeth good manners. Men and women commonly favor most of those good or evil things which in youth they learned. Therefore, to prove good, honest, and virtuous, it importeth and forceth much from the infancy to be well-governed and christianly brought up, for we retain much more of the customs wherewith we be bred than of the inclinations wherewith we be born.

All these properties are not spied at three or four comings and meetings of the party. For hypocrisy is spun with a fine thread and none are so often deceived as lovers. He therefore which will know all his wife's qualities, or she that will perceive her husband's dispositions and inclinations before either be married to them, had need to see one the other eating and walking, working and playing, and talking and laughing and chiding too. Or else it may be the one shall have with the other less than he or she looked for or more than they wished for.

Here is to be remembered a thing adjoined to marriage and going before it, namely, Betrothing being a solemn and laudable custom of God's children (as is proved, Deut. 20.7 and 22-24). This Betrothing is a covenant between the parties to be married before fit witnesses appointed thereto. Whereby they give their troth that they will and shall marry together, except some lawful unmeetness⁴ and disliking of each of other do hinder it in the meantime. The practice of it we see where the Virgin Mary being betrothed to Joseph, yet they had not met together, to wit, to accompany together according to the end of marriage (Matt. 1.18, Luke 1.27). This custom, noted and marked in divers places of the Scripture, hath divers good grounds to be observed, which prove that there ought to be a Contract before marriage. And for the better understanding of this point of Betrothing, it shall not be amiss in some plain and short manner to make known the holy doctrine hereof, with the doctrine also of marriage and marriage duties.

First, then, we must know that every marriage that hath been well and orderly used, either of the heathen (which were only enlightened with the law of nature) or of the people of God, who also were to be directed by his word, was perfected by two solemn actions: that is, by an apparent and open Contract, and by public marriage, the true and unfeigned confirmation thereof. Whereof we will first speak of a Contract (which is also called espousing, affiancing, betrothing, or handfasting), then of marriage itself.

And for betrothing or espousals, we read in the writing of ancient Philosophers, Histories, Orators, Poets, and others that they be of great antiquity, of necessary use, and have been ordinarily practiced. Inasmuch as the users thereof are highly commended, the neglecters and abusers hereof sharply rebuked and condemned. Which seeing they could not do but upon

knowledge and judgement, it doth manifestly declare that they did it by nature's law, written and bred in their breasts. And therefore that even nature itself, though in some matters stark blind and in many of very dim sight, yet she hath in all ages bewrayed the lawfulness, the necessity, and the use of espousals to be the first step and degree to a lawful and comfortable marriage.

But to omit this law and to come to the written word, let us further consider what allowance we find in the same, and consequently what it is not only to marry, not only according to the direction of nature, but also in the Lord. First, it is certain that the Lord approveth them as his own sacred ordinance, for we read in Exodus 21.7-11 how carefully he provideth by sundry and many straight commandments for the Maidservant that is betrothed. First, that she shall not go out of her service as the Menservants do. Secondly, that her Master shall have no power to sell her to a strange people. Thirdly, that being betrothed unto his son he shall deal with her as with his own daughter. Fourthly, if another wife be taken with her, that neither her food, her raiment, nor recompense of her Virginitie shall any whit at all be diminished. Fifthly, that whensoever she goeth out of her service she shall pay no money at all. None whereof the Lord would have done (much less all of them) unless espousals had been his own ordinance, instituted, ordained, and commanded by himself to be used even of the Maidservant that was bought and sold.

Again, it is written in Deuteronomy 22.23ff. how the Lord by like commandment provideth for the espoused maid being inoffensive yet being guilty, he punisheth with less punishment than if she had been indeed married. First, then, he commandeth that if any man shall abuse a betrothed virgin in the City both shall be stoned to death, the Maid because she cried not, the man because he hath humbled his neighbor's wife. Whereby the way is to be remembered how God calleth the betrothed a wife. If then such wickedness by justice deserveth death, and if betrothed persons be truly to be termed man and wife only in regard of the precedent espousals, we may then plainly see how highly the Lord doth esteem and honor them. The breach whereof he punisheth with the punishment of adultery, and the persons betrothed he honoreth with the names of man and wife. If, indeed, he had not ordained and allowed them but that they had been of human institution alone, he would not have honored them with such titles or have imposed death by stones for the breach of man's ordinance. Again, if a man abuse a betrothed maid in the field he saith that the man shall die, but unto the maid thou shalt do nothing because there is in the maid no cause of death.

Now, imposing death upon this man and not upon him that abuseth a maid not betrothed, the Lord doth hereby evidently teach that espousals are a principal degree in marriage. And therefore the unlawful breach thereof

deserveth death. For what else should the Lord grace them with such great privileges and punish the breach thereof with severe punishment?

Further, the faithful in all ages, instructed by these and such commandments, approved and practiced these espousals not only by themselves but also by their children. Samson, liking and loving a woman of the Philistines in Timnah, desired his Father and Mother to give her to him to wife, and so they did, at which time Samson made a feast according to the custom of the young men (Judg. 14.1ff). Albeit, her father afterward would not suffer him to marry her but gave her to another, for which injury Samson revenged himself of the Philistines by burning up the ricks of standing corn, vineyards, and olives. For which the Philistines burnt both the Father and the daughter. So David begged Michal of her father Saul, who gave her to him to wife with condition that he would bring him a hundred foreskins of the Philistines (1 Sam. 18.15, 26-27). And therefore, when Saul was dead he required her of Ishbosheth, Saul's son, who sent her unto him. Also, Joseph and Mary, the mother of Christ, were betrothed, which God would never have permitted if it had not been of his own ordinance and agreeable to his own will, or if he might any manner of way have stained either Joseph's honesty or Mary's virginity. Nay, if he had not much more graced and adorned both then the want of espousals could have done.

And to avoid tediousness in so plain a truth, seeing the Scripture giveth power and authority to Parents to give and not to give their children in marriage, saying let him do what he will (1 Cor. 7.36-38).

Again, he that giveth her in marriage doth well and he that giveth her not to marriage doth better (whereof we shall speak more at large anon). There must needs be before the public act of marriage some special time appointed, wherein both Parents and parties may testify and signify their mutual liking and consents, unless they despise to marry in the Lord.

Wherefore, if the law of nature, the law of God, the practice of the Heathen, the custom of Faithful, especially of the Parents of Christ; if the punishment of the espousal-breakers and the rewards and privileges of the espoused; and finally, if the fatherly authority over children do approve and require the continual use of this ordinance of God, it must needs be confessed to be both lawful and necessary. Yea, being the first principal part of marriage itself, it must needs be honorable in his kind as well as marriage itself is. Now then, in the next place, let us see and learn what a Contract is, to the end that upon sound knowledge and right judgment we may always use it well and never ill for want of good understanding.

A Contract is a voluntary promise of marriage, mutually made between one man and one woman, both being meet and free to marry one another, and therefore allowed so to do by their Parents.

Christ interpreting it sayth, "From the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19.8), proving that Moses permitted divorce of the first wife and marriage of the second, not moved or warranted by the authority of God's institution but by a fearful and timorous consideration of the hardness of the people's hearts whom he ruled, lest they should have rebelled against him if he had not so done. Of the law, because there was by this means great injury done to God's truth and to the wives divorced. Besides, the law itself, well understood as Christ expoundeth it (Matt. 5.32), admitteth no divorce except it be for fornication.

And that the Lord did disallow and hate all other kinds of divorce made without the cause of fornication, it is evident in that he condemneth the second marriage after the first divorce, affirming that the woman so divorced is defiled by her second husband (Deut. 24.4), which could not be true if their marriage had been lawful and warrantable by the commandment of God. For where the marriage is lawful and honorable, there the bed is undefiled (Heb. 13.4). Of the Prophets, "Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and thy wife of thy youth against whom thou hast transgressed, yet is she thy companion and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he abundance of the spirit. And wherefore one? Because he sought a godly seed. Therefore keep yourselves in your spirit and let none trespass against the wife of his youth. If thou hatest her, put her away (sayth the Lord of Israel). Yet he covereth the injury under his garment (sayth the Lord of Hosts). Therefore keep yourselves in your spirit and transgress not" (Mal. 2.14-16). Than which words what can be more plainly spoken against this sin of having more wives than one? For doth not the Prophet plainly say that God is witness that they have transgressed against the wife of their youth and covenant? Doth he not call them to the first institution when God made but one, and that because he would have a godly seed and not an adulterous generation? Doth he not further say that in putting away the wife they did nothing else but cover injury under pretence of his law as with a garment? And finally, doth he not give a clean contrary commandment to that wicked custom of divorce and marrying of others, when he saith, "Keep yourselves in your spirit, and let none transgress against the wife of his youth, and of his covenant?" Surely, none can be so blind but reading this portion of scripture he must needs plainly see and acknowledge the same. . . .

What the Duty of a Wife Is towards Her Husband

This duty is comprehended in these three points. First, that she reverence her husband. Secondly, that she submit herself and be obedient unto him. And lastly, that she do not wear gorgeous apparel beyond her degree and place, but her attire must be comely and sober according to her calling. The first point is proved by the Apostles Peter and Paul, whereby they set forth

the wives' duties to their husbands, commanding them to be obedient unto them although they be profane and irreligious, and that they ought to do so much the more that, by their honest life and conversation, they might win them to the obedience of the Lord (1 Pet. 3.1, Ephes. 5.22, Col. 3.18, 1 Cor 7.3).

Now, for so much as the Apostle would have Christian wives that are matched with ungodly husbands and such as are not yet good Christians to reverence and obey them, much more they should show themselves thankful to God, and willingly and dutifully perform this obedience and subjection when they are coupled in marriage with godly, wise, discreet, learned, gentle, loving, quiet, patient, honest, and thrifty husbands. And therefore they ought evermore to reverence them and to endeavor with true obedience and love to serve them, to be loath in any wise to offend them. Yea, rather to be careful and diligent to please them that their soul may bless them. And if at any time it shall happen that the wife shall anger or displease her husband by doing or speaking anything that shall grieve him, she ought never to rest until she hath pacified him and gotten his favor again. And if he shall chance to blame her without a cause and for that which she could not help or remedy (which thing sometimes happeneth even of the best men), yet she must bear it patiently and give him no uncomely or unkind words for it, but evermore look upon him with a loving and cheerful countenance, and so rather let her take the fault upon her than seem to be displeased.

Let her be always merry and cheerful in his company, but yet not with too much lightness. She must beware in any wise of swelling, pouting, lowering, or frowning, for that is a token of a cruel and unloving heart, except it be in respect of sin or in time of sickness. She may not be sorrowful for any adversity that God sendeth, but always to be careful that nothing be spilt or go to waste through her negligence. In any wise, see that she be quick and cleanly about her husband's meat and drink, and to prepare him the same according to his diet in due season (Gen. 27.9). Let her show herself, in word and deed, wise, humble, courteous, gentle, and loving towards her husband and also towards such as he doth love. And then shall she lead a blessed life. Let her show herself not only to love no man so well as her husband, but also to love none other at all but him, unless it be for her husband's sake. Wherefore let the wife remember that (as the Scripture reporteth), she is one body with her husband, so that she ought to love him none otherwise than herself (Gen. 2.23-24, Matt. 19.5, 1 Cor. 6.16, Ephes. 5.31). For this is the greatest virtue of a married woman, this is the thing that wedlock signifieth and commandeth, that the wife should reckon to have her husband for both father, mother, brother, and sister, like as Adam was unto Eve, and as the most noble and chaste woman Andromache said her

husband Hector was unto her: "Thou are unto me both father and mother, / Mine own dear husband and well beloved brother."⁸

And if it be true that men do say that friendship maketh one heart of two, much more truly and effectually ought wedlock to do the same, which far passeth all manner both friendship and kindred. Therefore it is not said that marriage doth make one man, or one mind, or one body of two, but clearly one person. Wherefore matrimony requireth a greater duty of the husband towards his wife and the wife towards her husband than otherwise they are bound to show to their parents. The Apostle biddeth, "to rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12.15). With whom should the wife rejoice rather than with her loving husband? Or with whom should she weep and mourn rather than with her own flesh? "I will not leave thee," saith Elisha to Elijah (2 Kings 2.2), so she should say I will never leave him till death. "Bear one another's burden," saith Paul (Gal. 6.2). Who shall bear one another's burden if the wife do not bear the husband's burden? Wicked Jezebel comforted her husband in his sickness (1 Kings 21.5), and Jeroboam's wife sought for his health though she was as bad as he (1 Kings 14.4). God did not bid Sarah leave her father and country as he did bid her husband, yet because he bade Abraham leave his she left hers too (Gen. 12.1), showing that she was content not only to be his playfellow but his yokefellow too.

Beside a yokefellow she is called a Helper (Gen. 2.18), to help him in his labors, to help him in his troubles, to help him in his sickness like a woman physician, sometime with her strength and sometime with her counsel. For sometime, as God confoundeth the wise by the foolish and the strong by the weak, so he teacheth the wise by the foolish and helpeth the strong by the weak. Therefore Peter saith, "Husbands are won by the conversation of their wives" (1 Pet. 3.1), as if he should say sometime the weaker vessel is the stronger vessel. And Abraham may take counsel of Sarah as Naaman was advised by his servant (2 Kings 5.3). The Shunamite's counsel made her husband receive a Prophet into his house (2 Kings 4.9), and Esther's counsel made her husband spare the Church of the Jews (Esth. 7.3). So some have been better help to their husbands than their husbands have been to them, for it pleaseth God to provoke the wise with the foolish, as he did the Jews with the Gentiles (Deut. 32.31, Rom. 10.19).

Beside a helper she is called a Comforter too, and therefore the man is bid to rejoice in his wife (Prov. 5.18-19). Which is as much to say that wives must be the rejoicing of their husbands even like David's harp to comfort Saul (1 Sam. 16.23). A good wife therefore is known when her words and deeds and countenance are such as her husband loveth. She must not examine whether he be wise or simple but that she is his wife, and therefore they that are bound must obey, as Abigail loved her husband though he were a fool, churlish and evil-conditioned (1 Sam. 5.23). For the

wife is as much despised for taking rule over her husband as he for yielding it unto her. Therefore, one saith that a mankind woman is a monster, that is, half a woman and half a man. It seemeth not the mistress to be a master no more than it becometh the master to be mistress. But both must sail with their own wind, and both keep their standing.

Lastly, we call the wife Huswife, that is, housewife, not a street-wife, one that gaddeth up and down like Thamer (Gen. 38.14), nor a field-wife like Dinah (Gen. 34.1), but a house-wife, to show that a good wife keeps her house. And therefore Paul biddeth Titus to exhort women that they be chaste and keeping at home, presently after chaste he saith keeping at home, as though home were chastity's keeper (Tit. 2.5). And therefore Solomon, depicting and describing the qualities of a whore, setteth her at the door, now sitting upon her stall, now walking in the streets, now looking out of the window (Prov. 7.12), like cursed Jezebel, as if she held forth the glass of temptation for vanity to gaze upon (2 Kings 9.30). But chastity careth to please but one, and therefore she keeps her closet as if she were still at prayer.

The Angel asked Abraham, "Where is thy wife?" Abraham answered, "She is in the tent" (Gen. 18.9). The Angel knew where she was, but he asked that he might see how women in old time did keep their tents and houses. It is recorded of the Shunamite that she did ask her husband leave to go unto the Prophet. Though she went to a Prophet, and went of a good errand and for his cause as much as her own, yet she thought it not meet to go far abroad without her husband's leave (2 Kings 4.22).

The second point is that wives submit themselves and be obedient unto their own husbands as to the Lord, because the husband is by God's ordinance the wife's head, that is, her defender, teacher, and comforter (Ephes. 5.22-23, 1 Cor. 11.3 and 14.34). And therefore she oweth her subjection to her husband like as the Church doth to Christ, and because the example of Sarah, the mother of the faithful, which obeyed Abraham and called him Lord, moveth them thereunto (Gen. 18.12, 1 Pet. 3.6). This point is partly handled before in the first point, as in the duty of the husband to the wife.

As the Church should depend upon the wisdom, discretion, and will of Christ, and not follow what itself listeth, so must the wife also submit and apply herself to the discretion and will of her husband (Ephes. 5.24), even as the government and conduct of everything resteth in the head not in the body. Moses writeth that the Serpent was wise above all beasts of the field (Gen. 3.1), and that he did declare in assaulting the woman that, when he had seduced her, she might also seduce and deceive her husband. Saint Paul, noting this among other the causes of the woman's subjection (1 Tim. 2.14), doth sufficiently show that for the avoiding of the like inconveniences, it is God's will that she should be subject to her husband so

that she shall have no other discretion or will but what may depend upon her head. As also the same Moses saith, "Thy desire shall be subject to thy husband and he shall rule over thee" (Gen. 3.16). This dominion over the wife's will doth manifestly appear in this, that God in old time ordained that if the woman had vowed anything unto God it should, notwithstanding, rest in her husband to disavow it. So much is the wife's will subject to her husband. Yet it is not meant that the wife should not employ her knowledge and discretion, which God hath given her, in the help and for the good of her husband. But always it must be with condition to submit herself unto him, acknowledging him to be her head, that finally they may so agree in one as the conjunction of marriage doth require.

Yet, as when in a Lute or other musical instrument, two strings concurring in one tune, the sound nevertheless is imputed to the strongest and highest, so in a well ordered household there must be a communication and consent of counsel and will between the husband and the wife, yet such as the counsel and commandment may rest in the husband. True it is that some women are wiser and more discreet than their husbands, as Abigail the wife of Naball, and others. Whereupon Solomon saith, "A wise woman buildeth up the house" (Prov. 14.1), and "Blessed is the man that hath a discreet wife" (Eccles. 26.1).⁹ Yet still a great part of the discretion of such women shall rest in acknowledging their husbands to be their heads, and so using the graces that they have received of the Lord that their husbands may be honored not contemned, neither of them nor of others, which falleth out contrary when the wife will seem wiser than her husband. So that this modesty and government ought to be in a wife, namely, that she should not speak but to her husband or by her husband. And as the voice of him that soundeth a trumpet is not so loud as the sound that it yieldeth, so is the wisdom and word of a woman of greater virtue and efficacy when all that she knoweth and can do is as if it were said and done by her husband.

The obedience that the wife oweth to her husband dependeth upon this subjection of her will and wisdom unto him (1 Pet. 3.6, Ephes. 5.33, Esth. 1.1-12). So that women may not provoke their husbands by disobedience in matters that may be performed without offence to God, neither to presume over him, either in kindred or wealth, or obstinately to refuse in a matter that may trouble household peace and quiet. For disobedience begetteth contempt of the husband, and contempt wrath, and is many times the cause of troubles between the man and the wife. If the obedience importeth any difficulty, she may for her excuse gently propound the same, yet upon condition to obey in case the husband should persist in his intent, so long as the discommodity importeth no wickedness. For it is better to continue peace by obedience than to break it by resistance. And indeed it is natural in the members to obey the conduct and government of the head.

Yet must not this obedience so far extend as that the husband should command anything contrary to her honor, credit, and salvation, but as it is comely in the Lord (Col. 3.18, Ephes. 5.22). Therefore, as it were a monstrous matter and the means to overthrow the person that the body should, in refusing all subjection and obedience to the head, take upon it to guide itself and to command the head, so were it for the wife to rebel against the husband. Let her then beware of disordering and perverting the course which God in his wisdom hath established. And with all let her understand that going about it, she riseth not so much against her husband as against GOD, and that it is her good and honor to obey God in her subjection and obedience to her husband. If in the practice of this duty she find any difficulty or trouble through the inconsiderate course of her husband or otherwise, let her remember that the same proceedeth not of the order established by the Lord but through some sin afterward crept in, which hath mixed gall among the honey of the subjection and obedience that the woman should have enjoyed in that estate wherein, together with Adam, she was created after the image of God. And so let her humble herself in the sight of God and be well assured that her subjection and obedience is acceptable unto him. Likewise, that the more that the image of God is restored in her and her husband through the regeneration of the holy Ghost, the less difficulty shall she find in that subjection and obedience, as many in their marriage have indeed tried to their great contentment and consolation.

Further, there is a certain discretion and desire required of women to please the nature, inclinations, and manners of their husbands, so long as the same imports no wickedness. For as the looking-glass, howsoever fair and beautiful adorned, is nothing worth if it show that countenance sad which is pleasant or the same pleasant that is sad, so the woman deserveth no commendation that (as it were), contrarying her husband, when he is merry showeth herself sad or in his sadness uttereth her mirth. For as men should obey the laws of their cities, so women the manner of their husbands. To some women a beck¹⁰ of her husband is sufficient to declare that there is somewhat amiss that displeaseth him, and specially if she bear her husband any reverence. For an honest matron hath no need of any great staff but of one word or one sour countenance. Moreover, a modest and chaste woman that loveth her husband must also love her house, as remembering that the husband that loveth his wife cannot so well like of the sight of any tapestry as to see his wife in his house. For the woman that gaddeth from house to house to prate confoundeth herself, her husband, and family (Titus 2.5).

But there are four reasons why the woman is to go abroad. First, to come to holy meetings, according to the duty of godliness. The second, to visit such as stand in need, as the duty of love and charity do require. The third, for employment and provision in household affairs committed to her

charge. And lastly, with her husband when he shall require her (Gen. 20.1ff.). The evil and unquiet life that some women have and pass with their husbands is not so much for that they commit with and in their persons, as it is for that they speak with their tongues. If the wife would keep silence when her husband beginneth to chide, he should not have so unquiet dinners, neither she the worse supper. Which surely is not so, for at the same time that the husband beginneth to utter his grief, the wife then beginneth to scold and chafe. Whereof doth follow that, now and then, most unnaturally they come to handy gripes,¹¹ more beastlike than christianlike, which their so doing is both a great shame and a foul discredit to them both.

The best means, therefore, that a wife can use to obtain and maintain the love and good liking of her husband is to be silent, obedient, peaceable, patient, studious to appease his choler if he be angry, painful and diligent in looking to her business, to be solitary and honest. The chief and special cause why most women do fail in not performing this duty to their husbands is because they be ignorant of the word of God which teacheth the same and all other duties. And therefore their souls and consciences not being brought into subjection to God and his word, they can never until then yield and perform true subjection and obedience to their husbands, and behave themselves so every way as Christian wives are in duty bound to do. But if wives be not so dutiful, serviceable, and subject to their husbands as in conscience they ought, the only cause thereof for the most part is through the want and neglect of the wise, discreet, and good government that should be in the husbands, besides the want of good example that they should give unto their wives both in word and deed. For as the common saying is: such a husband such a wife; a good Jack maketh a good Jill. For so much as marriage maketh of two persons one, therefore the love the husband and wife may the better be kept and increased and so continued, if they remember the duties last spoken of, as also not forget these three points following.

1. They must be of one heart, will, and mind, and neither to upbraid or cast the other in the teeth with their wants and imperfections anyways, or to pride themselves in their gifts. But rather the one to endeavor to supply the other's wants, that so they, both helping and doing their best together, may be one perfect body.

2. It doth greatly increase love when the one faithfully serveth the other, when in things concerning marriage the one hideth no secrets nor privities from the other, and the one doth not utter or publish the frailties or infirmities of the other. And when of all that ever they obtain or get they have but one common purse together, the one locking up nothing from the other. And also when the one is faithful to the other in eating, drinking, and so in all their necessities and affairs. Likewise, when the one harkneth to the other, and when the one thinketh not scorn of the other, and when, in

matters concerning the government of the house, the one will be counseled and advised by the other. And always the one to be loving, kind, courteous, plain, and gentle in words, manners, and deeds.

3. Let the one learn ever to be obsequious, diligent, and serviceable to the other in all other things. And this will the sooner come to pass if the one observe and mark what thing the other can away withal or cannot away withal, and what pleaseth or displeaseth them. And so from thenceforth to do the one and to leave the other undone. And if one of them be angry and offended with the other, then let the party grieved open and make known to the other their grief in due time and with discretion. For the longer a displeasure or evil will rageth in secret, the worse will be the discord. And this must be observed that it be done in a fit and convenient time, because there is some season in the which, if griefs were showed, it should make greater debate. As if the wife should go about to tell or admonish her husband when he is out of patience or moved with anger, it should then be no fit time to talk with him. Therefore Abigail, perceiving Naball her husband to be drunk, would not speak to him until the morning (1 Sam. 25.36-37). Both the husband and wife must remember that the one be not so offended and displeased with the manners of the other that they should thereupon forsake the company one of the other. For that were like to one that being stung with the Bees would therefore forsake the honey. And therefore, no man may put away his wife for any cause except for whoredom, which must be duly proved before a lawful Judge.¹²

But all godly and faithful married folks are to commend their state and marriage to God by humble and fervent prayer, that he, for his beloved son's sake, would so bless them and their marriage that they may so christianly and dutifully agree between themselves that they may have no cause of any separation or divorcement. For like as all manner of medicines (and specially as they that go nighest death as to cut off whole members, etc.) are very loathsome and terrible, even so is divorcement indeed a medicine, but a perilous and terrible medicine. Therefore every good Christian husband and wife ought with all care and heedfulness so to live in marriage that they have no need of such medicine. As the holy Scripture maketh mention of many wives and women that were wicked and ungodly, as partly may be seen by these quotations (1 Kings 11.1-2, Prov. 21.9, 14.22, 25.24, and 27.15, Eccles. 7.28-30), so contrariwise, the same sacred Scripture also commendeth unto us many women that have been devout, religious, and virtuous, as partly is manifest by that which hath already been said, and also by these places of Scripture (Ruth 3.11, 1 Sam. 25.3, Prov. 14.1 and 31.10, Matt 28.1, 8-10, Luke 8.2-3, 14.1, and 23.55-56, Acts 1.14, 9.36-39, 16.14-15, and 17.4, 2 John 1, 2 Tim. 1.5). And whosoever shall observe it in the reading of the word of God shall find that it speaketh of the praise of as many, and more, good women as men. Yea,

and we are persuaded that if at this day a due survey should be taken of all men and women throughout her Majesty's dominions, that there would be found in number more woman that are faithful, religious, and virtuous than men.

Now, if a wife be desirous to know how far she is bound to obey her husband the Apostle resolveth this doubt where he saith Ephesians 5.22, saying, "Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands as to the Lord." As if he had said: wives cannot be disobedient to their husbands but they must resist God also, who is the author of this subjection, and that she must regard her husband's will as the Lord's will, but yet withal, as the Lord commandeth one that which is good and right, so she should obey her husband in good and right or else she doth not obey him as the Lord but as the tempter. The first subjection of the woman began at sin. For when God cursed her for seducing her husband when the Serpent had deceived her, he said, "He shall have authority over thee" (Gen. 3.16). And therefore, as the man named all other creatures in sign that they should be subject to him, as a servant which cometh when his master calleth him by his name, so he did name the woman also, in token that she should be subject to him likewise. And therefore Ahasuerus made a law that every man should bear rule in his own house and not the woman (Esth. 1.20-22). Because she sinned first therefore she is humbled most. And ever since, the daughters of Sarah are bound to call their husbands Lord, as Sarah called her husband (1 Pet. 3.6), that is, to take them for heads and governors (Judg. 19.26).

Amongst the particular duties that a Christian wife ought to perform in her family, this is one: namely, that it belongeth to her to nurse³ her own children, which to omit and to put them forth to nursing is both against the law of nature and also against the will of God. Besides it is hurtful both for the child's body and also for his wit. And lastly it is hurtful to the mother herself, and it is an occasion that she falleth into much sickness thereby.

First, Nature giveth milk to the woman for none other end but that she should bestow it upon her child. We see by experience that every beast and every fowl is nourished and bred of the same that did bear it. Only some women love to be mothers but not nurses. And as every tree doth cherish and nourish that which it bringeth forth, even so also it becometh natural mothers to nourish their children with their own milk (1 Tim. 5.10).

Secondly, the example of the Scriptures are many that prove this. As Sarah who nursed Isaac though she were a Princess, and therefore able enough to have had others to have taken the pains (Gen. 21.7), as also having been a beautiful woman even in old age, being of great years, yet she herself nurseth and giveth suck to her son. Also Anna, whom the holy Ghost hath left it recorded as a commendation unto her, for that she nursed her own son Samuel (1 Sam. 1.23). So when God chose a nurse for Moses he led the Handmaid of Pharaoh's daughter to her mother, as though God

would have none to nurse him but his mother (Exod. 2.3).¹⁴ Likewise, after when the Son of God was born, his father thought none of it to be his nurse but the virgin his mother (Matt. 2.14, Luke 27.12). It is a commendation of a good woman, and set down in the first place as a principal good work in a widow that is well reported of, if she have nursed her children (1 Tim. 5.10). And therefore, such as refuse thus to do may well and fitly be called nice and unnatural mothers. Yea, in so doing they make themselves but half-mothers, and so break the holy bond of nature, in locking up her breast from her child and delivering it forth like the Cuckoo, to be hatched in the Sparrow's nest.

Again, the children's bodies be commonly so affected as the milk is which they receive. Now, if the Nurse be of an evil complexion, and as she is affected in her body or in her mind or have some hidden disease, the child, sucking of her breast, must needs take part with her. And if that be true which the learned do say, that the temperature of the mind follows the constitution of the body, needs must it be that if the nurse be of a naughty nature the child must take thereafter. Yet if it be that the nurse be of a good complexion, of an honest behavior (whereas contrariwise, Maidens that have made a scape⁵ are commonly called to be Nurses), yet can it not be but that the mother's milk should be much more natural for the child than the milk of a stranger. As by experience, let a man be long accustomed to one kind of drink, if the same man change his air and his drink he is like to mislike it. As the eggs of a Hen are altered under a Hawk. Nevertheless, such women as be oppressed with infirmities, diseases, want of milk, or other just and lawful causes are to be dispensed withal, but whose breasts have this perpetual drought? Forsooth it is like the gout, no beggars may have it but Citizens or Gentlewomen. In the Ninth Chapter of Hosea, verse fourteen, dry breasts are named for a curse. What a lamentable hap have Gentlewomen, to light upon this curse more than other? Sure, if their breasts be dry (as they say) they should fast and pray together that this curse might be removed from them.

And lastly, that it is hurtful to the mothers themselves, both Physicians can tell and some women full oft have felt how they have been troubled with sore breasts, besides other diseases that happen to them through plenty of milk.

The wife is further to remember that God hath given her two breasts not that she should employ and use them for a show or of ostentation, but in the service of God and to be a help to her husband in suckling the child common to them both. Experience teacheth that God converteth her blood into the milk, wherewith the child is nursed in the mother's womb. He bringeth it into the breasts, furnished with nipples convenient to minister the warm milk unto the child, whom he endueth with industry to draw out the milk for his own sustenance. The woman, therefore, that can suck her child

and doth it not, but refuseth this office and duty of a mother, declareth herself to be very unthankful to God, and (as it were) forsaketh and contemneth the fruit of her womb. And therefore the brute beasts, lying upon the ground and granting not one nipple or two but six or seven to their young ones, shall rise in judgment against these dainty half-mothers who, for fear of wrinkling of their faces or to avoid some small labor, do refuse this so necessary a duty of a mother due to her children.

The properties due to a married wife are that she have gravity when she walketh abroad, wisdom to govern her house, patience to suffer her husband, love to breed and bring up her children, courteous towards her neighbours, diligence to lay up and to save such goods as are within her charge, a friend of honest company, and a greater enemy of wanton and light toys. So then the principal duty of the wife is first to be subject to her husband (Ephes. 5.22, Col. 3.18, 1 Pet 3.1). To be chaste and shamefast, modest and silent, godly and discreet. To keep herself at home for the good government of her family, and not to stray abroad without just cause.

Here it is not to be pretermitted¹⁶ but that we must say somewhat touching men and women that be twice married, and so become Stepfathers and Stepmothers. Such husbands and wives as marry again, after the death of their first wives or first husbands, are carefully to remember that they do not displease their wives or their husbands which they now have by overmuch rehearsing of their first wife or first husband. For the course and condition of the world is such that husbands and wives do account and recover things past better than things that be present. And the reason is because no commodity or felicity is so great but it hath some grief and displeasure and also some bitterness mingled with it. Which so long as it is present grieveth us sore, but when it is once gone it leaveth no great feeling of itself behind it. And for that cause, we seem to be less troubled with sorrows and discomforts past than with those that are present. Also, age stealeth and cometh on apace, which causeth both men and women to be the less able to sustain and endure troubles and griefs now than before. Therefore, such men and women as be twice married and be wise and religious ought not to esteem their wife or husband which is dead better than her or him which they enjoy now alive, remembering the common proverb that we must live by the quick and not by the dead, and that we must make much of that we now have.

Let the name of Stepfather and Stepmother admonish and put them in mind of their duty towards the children of the one and the other. For Stepfather and Stepmother doth signify and a stead-father and a stead-mother, that is, one father or one mother dieth, and another succeedeth and cometh in their stead and room. Therefore, to the end that both their loves may be settled towards the children of the one and the other they must remember that they are stead-father and stead-mother, that is, instead of

their own father and mother. And therefore they ought to love them, to tender them, and to cherish them as their own father or mother did. They must not look upon them like Rehoboam, who told his people that he would be worse unto them than his predecessor (1 Kings 12.13-21), for then the children will dislike of you and turn from you as his subjects did from him. But ye must come to them as David came to the people after Saul's death, who said, "Though your master Saul be dead, yet I will reign over you" (2 Sam. 2.7). So ye must say to them, though your father be dead or though your mother be dead, yet I will be a father, or I will be a mother unto you. So the children will love you as much as their dead father or dead mother did. For that man and that woman that are led with discretion, reason, and consideration will reckon himself and his wife all one, and likewise, she will account herself and her husband as one.

And therefore they ought to account both the children of the one and of the other as common to them both. For if friendship make all things common among friends, insomuch that many have loved and favored their friend's children as their own, how much more effectually and perfectly ought marriage to cause the same, which is the highest degree not only of friendships but also of all blood and kindred.

But Stepmothers do more often offend and fail in this duty than men, by reason that their affections be stronger than men's and many times overrule them. And therefore they are earnestly to be admonished and warned that they show themselves to those motherless children no stepmother's friendship but a right motherly kindness. Let the stepmother advisedly consider that God hath ordained and appointed her (instead of their own mother) to be to them a right true mother, and not only to regard them as children but as orphan children, and requireth her to love them and to do them good as to her own. What a grief would it be to her heart if she should know now that her own children, whom she hath borne in her own body, should (after her death) have a stepmother that would be rigorous, churlish, and unkind unto them? Doubtless, those children's mother that dead is had upon her deathbed no less care for her children. Let her therefore always have in mind this saying of our Saviour Christ, "As you measure unto other, so it shall be measured to you again" (Matt. 7.2), that is, as the stepmother doth entreat the children of her predecessor, so another wife may come after her and entreat her children. For he that took away the first mother and sent her can take away the second mother and send a third, which will not be like a stead-mother to hers unless she be like a stead-mother to these.

Verily, a good woman will be unto her husband's children that which she may hear them call her so often, that is, Mother. For what Christian woman is so far from all humanity and natural affection that will not be moved and mitigated with this word Mother, of whom soever it be spoken? And chiefly of children, which cannot flatter but speak even so from their

heart, like as they would to their own mother of whom they were born. How sweet is the name of friendship? How many injuries, hatreds, and displeasures doth it hide and put away? Then how much more effectual ought the sweet name of mother to be, which is full of incredible love? Therefore, every religious and loving wife will be mollified and moved in her heart and mind when she shall hear herself named mother by any of her husband's children. Otherwise she shall show herself to be more unnatural and unkind than the wild savage beast. For there is no beast so outrageous and cruel but if any other young beast of her own kind fawn upon her she will by and by show kindness and mildness unto it. And shall not her husband's children make her kind and loving unto them when they call and speak unto her by the loving and sweet name of mother?

The third and last point that appertaineth to the duty of wives is that they do not wear gorgeous and sumptuous apparel or broidered hair, trimmed with gold. But that after the example of holy women which trusted in God, they be sober in outward apparel and ought to be garnished and decked inwardly with virtues of their minds, as with gentleness, meekness, quietness, and chastity, which indeed are most precious things in the sight of God. This point is so plainly spoken of by the Apostle to Timothy 2.9-10, in which place he so flatly condemneth both the excess and pride of apparel, as also the pomp, curiosity, and wantonness which women use in trimming their heads by plating, crising,¹⁷ broiding, curling, and curiously laying out, that no man can say more against it in so few words as he hath spoken to the utter dislike thereof. For if a man should occupy himself and give liberty to his pen to write of the horrible abuse and excessive pride that many women commit on this behalf, he should rather want time to write than matter to speak. Therefore such women as will not reform themselves herein we leave them to the Lord who (no doubt) will, in his appointed time, not only severely punish them but also their husbands for suffering this great wickedness and dissoluteness in their wives, as he did the Jews for the same sin, as plainly may be seen in Isaiah 3.16ff.

For so it falleth out according to the common proverb, that pride goeth before and shame and destruction cometh after (Prov. 16.18). And on the contrary part, we hope that such women as be true professors of Christ and his religion will both attire and dress their heads so decently, and also content themselves with such comely apparel as best beseemeth their calling and degree (Tit. 2.3). So as, by their good example, they may draw on other women to reform themselves in this behalf, and so rather to come short of that which their ability and place would serve to maintain than any ways to exceed herein to the slander of their profession. And let them not so much regard what thing they would fain have, but rather what they cannot well be without. So that whatsoever they have no need of is too dear of a farthing.

NOTES

1. In support, Cleaver also cites Gen. 2.24, Matt. 19.5, Mark 10.7, 1 Cor. 1.16, and Ephes. 5.31.
2. That is, a good husband makes a good wife. The saying can also be applied to the relationship between a male master and a female servant.
3. On this point Cleaver cites Num. 16.26, Josh. 23.12, 2 Chron. 19.2, 2 Cor. 6.14, and Ephes. 5.7.
4. Unsuitability.
5. In no way or respect.
6. Cleaver also cites Ephes. 5.31 and 1 Cor. 6.16.
7. From *Idios*, own, personal, private.
8. Homer, *Iliad* 6.429-30.
9. Cleaver also cites Prov. 18.22, 19.14 and 31.
10. Beckoning gesture.
11. Grabbing or wrestling with each other.
12. Cleaver cites 1 Cor. 7.10-16, Matt. 19.6-9 and 5.32, and Luke 16.18.
13. Breastfeed.
14. Cleaver also cites Judg. 13.24, Cant. 8.1, Ps. 22.9.
15. A slip, that is, borne a child while unmarried.
16. Omitted.
17. Plating: plating or braiding; crising: curling.

