

The desire to be a man has never taken deep root in my heart, but I have often thought I should like to be a husband for a little while. It is true that a missionary life has its charms, and various philanthropic enterprises are alluring. It is a grand thing to be a minister who ministers unto the needy, or a physician who heals the sick, or a musician, or an artist, who makes life beautiful, but nevertheless the greatest opportunity for being a benefactor—for leading a noble, magnanimous and self-forgetful life is given to the husband. It is of course true that an equal opportunity for nobility, magnanimity and self-forgetfulness is afforded to the wife, but this truth has been preached and practised for generations past. It is time now to give the other side a chance.

Previous to becoming a husband I don't think I should fall in love. On the contrary I should rise into love. Instead of stumbling into a pitfall I should be as it were caught away in a cloud. Once above the world I should strive to maintain this ascendancy and never again become of the earth earthy. As for the object of my love, I should not dream of asking her to be mine. It would be impossible for me to respect a woman who belonged to any one. "Give me, I entreat you, the best right to make you happy. That is and always will be the strongest desire of my life." Such or something like it would be the form of my address. But lovely words drop easily from lover's lips. In any case these flowers of speech should, of course, bloom perennially.

After entering upon the life matrimonial my first care should be to establish firmly and guard jealously the divine right of all husbands—the right to make their wives as happy as possible. I should constantly bear in mind that the delicate, imperceptible, intangible thing called happiness is dependent upon trifles light as air. I would try to please my wife in trifles. Her finer taste and acuter perception should rule my life and conduct. I would come home in the evening with the same eagerness and gladness that made me so welcome in our courtship days. If she were cold and unresponsive I should remember that there is no text in the Bible that says, "We who are strong should be indifferent to the infirmities of those who are weak, and ought always to please ourselves." I would study to please. If it were possible I would share her trouble or take it entirely on my own shoulders, but if not I would make her forget it. By every gracious and graceful means in my power I would compel her to be happy. The only way to make a woman angelic is to treat her as if she were an angel. So far as I can see the best advice to be given to husbands is, be good and you will be happy. To wives, be happy and you will be good.

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