

No 36.

THE  
PLEASURES  
OF  
MATRIMONY,

INTERWOVEN WITH SUNDRY

*Comical and Delightful Stories,*

WITH

The Charming Delights and Ravishing Sweets of

Wooing and Wedlock,

*In all its Diverting Enjoyments.*



STIRLING:  
PRINTED BY WILLIAM MACNIE,  
And Sold Wholesale and Retail.

1828.

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&c.

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It is a strange thing that people should ask of the fifteen comforts or pleasures of Matrimony, as if they could be numbered; whereas I affirm, that the pleasures of Matrimony are numberless. No wonder then there is nothing more desired, or even covered, than Matrimony, and that it has been in such high esteem among all nations from the beginning of the world. It is true there has been a clamour against it; and many that condemn it, and cry it down, mistake comforts for discomforts.

And yet even those who complain the most against Matrimony, will allow that there are fifteen comforts in it, and if so, though there were no more, which yet I will not grant, who, that is not a madman, would not marry to enjoy fifteen such comforts, as all the world cannot afford him besides? But what will such men say to wooing? I own indeed, it is not Matrimony itself, but it is the highway to it, and he that marries without it loses one of the chiefest pleasures that belong to it. So that in order to treat of the pleasures of Matrimony, I find it necessary to begin with Wooing.

Wooing consists in a man's pitching upon some object of his affections of the female sex; and it is a comfort there are more maids than mankind, that he is not confined in his choice; for if one will not, another will. Well having fixed upon the desired she, and found out her habitation, with what her fortune is, he next equips himself as fine as the tailor and semstress can make him, and prepares for his address; and it is a pleasure to him to be thus rigged, to win his fair mistress. Now, whether the girls have

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father or mother, uncle or aunt, there's none but will admit him to pay a visit to his mistress, when he comes in the way of matrimony.

But now what a pleasure it is to be admitted to a kiss, and a gracious smile from his mistress. After that he has just shewed himself, and talked idly to her about half an hour, what a pleasure is it to him at his departure to oblige her maid with the king's picture, which causes her to give such a character of him, especially if the picture happens to be set in gold, as he begets in the young woman an affection towards him; which, if he comes to know at the second meeting, it is impossible to describe the transports it puts him into; it inspires such joy in his breast that he can scarce tell where he is, or what he does. But at his departure, he scarce forgets to double his generosity to the maid, as she gives her promises of further services to him. Nor is the young baggage worse than her word for she too well knows her own interest: and therefore in about a day or two Dear Mistress, says she, you cannot imagine where I have been this morning! No, says the young



gentlewoman, how should I? Why, says she, I have been at the conjurer's, but you cannot think what a man he is! I did but ask whether such a gentleman courted my mistress? and casting his eyes on his book, he told me he did; and described him so exactly, that no painter could have drawn his picture better; and besides that, he told me that this was the very man, and no other, whom fortune designed for you; but I would not have you believe me, but go to him yourself to-morrow.

The young gentlewoman hearing this, is all agog to know the truth of the matter, and having more mind for marriage than devotion, instead of prayer, goes to the conjurer, and he had not been a cunning man, if he had not told her right, being instructed by the maid before hand what to say. Well, the young gentlewoman being satisfied it was the will of the stars, begins presently to have a good opinion of him, of which the maid fails not to acquaint him. Now judge, reader, if this is not an extraordinary pleasure; for what can contribute more to his

satisfaction, than to find his mistress go to the devil to make sure of him.

But besides this, there passes many letters; and, O! what a pleasure it is to him to ransack all the academies of compliments for fine tropes and figures to adorn his style with. But then her answers! how transporting they are! how often does he kiss the blotted characters! But see how fresh pleasures crowd upon him. Just now he is told his mistress will be at a dancing in Lime-street; this fans the increasing flame; nothing will serve but he must be with her, and then how he smirks and simpers; but when he sees her dance he is all over transports; how much does he admire her lofty carriage: the holding up her petticoat enchants him, and the celestial motion of her buttocks make his teeth chatter, and his heart go pit a pat to think what he shall do with so much excellence! But it would take a volume to tell the pleasures of this interview: let it suffice to give him an opportunity to steal her pocket-handkerchief, and to treat her and her maid at the tavern. Nor can his mistress now refuse to let him take as many kisses as he

will, which yields him such a mighty pleasure, that he can talk of nothing else but the purple violet, the blushing rose, and the lily's whiteness; the phoenix nest is not so perfumed as she; and to describe her person, the riches of Mexico and Peru are far too mean to stand in competition with her; nay, all the dazzling jewels of the East must give way to her superiour lustre.—But when they have drank of the richest wines to recompence him for all his pains and charges, his mistress condescends to treat him, by letting him taste the charming cherries of her coral lips, and suck from thence the fragrant breath that far exceeds Arabia's rich perfume; which wraps him in such pleasure, that the young spark imagines he is in heaven. And if the very way to Matrimony be thus paved with delight, what must the end of it be? And truly were it not so, do you think the country clown would plough and harrow, yet fling away his sickle and flail for the love of Amariila? Or, would the tradesman leave his shop, but for the pleasures that attend it? It is this makes the apprentice court in hugger-mugger, and values not

the loss of his freedom, when once captivated by the fair Susannah's bright eye.— So mightily transporting are the pleasures of wooing above any other pleasures in the world.

But if the pleasures of Wooing are so very great then what are the pleasures of Wedding? Consent being given, and the wedding resolved on the lover has now free access to his mistress, and may kiss above board as much as he pleases; the which is another vast pleasure; as it is also to find himself the only welcome guest in the house, and, as it were already inoculated into the family: And then, it is another pleasure to hear every one commending his choice, and telling him how amiable and virtuous a wife he had chosen. Visitors crowd in upon him, especially of the fair sex, asking a thousand impertinent questions, which much needs be great pleasure for him to answer. When is the day? cries Mrs Prate-apace. Pray Sir, how near is your happiness? cries Tittle-tattle. But, in the midst of these impertinences, what a pleasure is it to the young man to hear his mother elect taking the woman up, and saying, Hold, neigh-



hours, fair and softly goes far! she shall not be married hugger-mugger; my child shall be married according to her quality; I am not for a stolen marriage.

But we will talk no more of preliminaries, but come to the thing itself; for all things being settled, and the appointed morning come up gets the bridegroom, and dresses himself in all his gaudy attire.

The bridemaïd hastens to the bride's chamber, and there finds her washed, breathing nothing but essence and jessamine, and her fine Holland smock ready to put on; so that being dressed in a trice, she appears more like an angel than like a mortal. She was scarcely dressed, but the bridegroom is coming into her chamber and with submissive knees, adores his earthly deity, and kisses the lilies of her white hands, and sips ambrosial nectar from her lips, and then conducts her to the room of state, where they both stand to welcome their invited guests.—And sure this must yield him much pleasure. Now things being ready, they take coach, environed by a great crowd of spectators, of which not one of them but must say

something.—There's a well matched couple, says one—There's a lovely couple, says another.—There will be sweet doing betwixt them to-night, says a third. And thus the rabble run along, till the church doors are shut, and keep them from coming any further. The knot is luckily fixed which can never be undone but by the death of one of them. And therefore, after the ceremony of 'I John take thee, Joan; to be my wedded wife: and I Joan take thee, John,' &c. they go from church again, and first receive the joy of the beggars; the bridegroom, for the grandeur of the Wedding, throwing amongst them a handful of small money, which sets them a scrambling: then taking coach, they return to the place from whence they set out, attended by the rabble, which is a mark of greatness.

Being come into the dining-room, the guests of course must all salute the bride, and, in return, the bridegroom must salute all the young women; and this must sure be a great pleasure to him. This usual formality being over, the bridegroom then drinks a bumper to the whole assembly.

By this time dinner is upon the table, and marinated with as much formality as at Lord Mayor's feast. After the parson says grace, they fall to without farther ceremony; and here comes a new pleasure to the bridegroom, to see all the guests address their glasses to the bride, and afterwards to him. And it will be a pleasure extraordinary to him if he can but keep himself sober till he goes to bed.

Nor is it less pleasure to hear the discourse at the table after the second course, when a jolly red nosed toper, a pot companion of the bride's father, began, saying, Marriage was instituted in a state of innocency, nay, even in Paradise; and that without it, the church would want pastors, and the kingdom soldiers to defend it.—

Nay, farther, that children are blessings from heaven, and therefore barrenness was accounted the greatest scandal in the world among the Jewish women: Aye and by the English women too, replies a grave old matron, and I should be sorry that my young mistress here, as well for my own sake as her's, should be under that curse; for I hope ere ten months, to carry her first boy to the font.

Dinner being over, the parson blesses them; when the midwife comes to the bridegroom, saying, Now, happy man, for a maidenhead; but there is a great discretion to be used in the gathering of it: it must be gently cropped for fear of spoiling; for, if you go too boisterously to work you'll pull it up by the roots; but if you do it just by degrees, it is young and tender, and you'll find it coming.

We will now suppose the afternoon worn out by dancing, to the great pleasure of the spectators, and the night begun, the bride is stolen away from the company, and put to bed; and after her, the bridegroom, now ready to consummate the highest joys of matrimony: but though the bridegroom now thinks each minute an age till he reaps the longed-for fruit of all his amorous expectations, he is still obliged to wait with patience; for up comes the sack posset, which the women think will make the bridegroom kind and lusty too; nor can the bride and bridegroom get void of this unnecessary ceremony, until some good compassionate lady throw on purpose, the stocking into the posset, when she pretended to



throw it at the bride. This caused the sack posset to be taken away; which, being done, it only remained now to kiss the women round, that so depart whilst the bride's mother locked fast the door, and took away the key, and none might interrupt them. They now, being both left alone, the bridegroom, without any doubt, improves his time; and therefore let this suffice, that they now revel in those joys they not long before durst hardly think of; and for the bridegroom, as Carew expresses it,

Now his enfranchis'd hand on every side,  
 May o'er her naked polish'd ivory glide;  
 No curtain now, o'er the transparent lawn,  
 Is there before her virgin treasure drawn,  
 Now void of all offence, he may behold;  
 Her bosom bare, and her unbraided gold:

But though he had revelled in bliss all night, yet his fair spouse's mother came to the fair couple in the morning, to inquire how her dearest daughter did.— Yet the son was first saluted with Son, how is it? So well, said he, that I have been this night in Paradise. With that she

put into his hand a plate of comfortable sweetmeats, consisting of eringoes &c. for his spouse and he to regale themselves, which done, she fills them a bowl of muscadine, and drops therein a new laid egg, which the bridegroom presenting to the partner of his pleasure, the mother fills another for himself, which, without entreating, he then drank quickly off.—But Mother Midnight, who longed to know how the bridegroom performed, and how many attacks he had made on the virgin fort, comes to the bride, and, with a whisper in her ear, would have her confess; but the lady replied only with a blush, which made the bridegroom guess what she meant, and therefore told her it was an unfair question as yet; you ought, said he, to tarry till we rise; and since we are recruited thus pray wait till the physic has done working, and then take the whole account together. Upon this, the mother and midwife retired. But to digest what they had eaten and drank, by taking a nap, but the drums and trumpets began to sound, and, in a moment, the street was full of benedictions to the bride and bridegroom; and this must be another

pleasure, for now the bridegroom, unwilling to pay the money for nothing, gets up and dances to the music ; and this must be a great pleasure, for all the senses are pleased at once.

Now the next day is spent in being treated by the bridemen at a tavern ; and now there can be room for nothing but pleasure.

The pleasures of the wedding being over—how ! over did I say ? I beg your pardon ; they are so far from being over, that they continue while they live together. And therefore I should say, being thus begun, they are attended by another pleasure, and that is housekeeping ; now time begins to jog the bridegroom by the elbow, and tell him he ought to mind his business : for bags will soon grow empty unless filled again.—And what is his pleasure now, but the business of housekeeping, and to get all things for it. He that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing, as the old proverb says. And sure the woman is in an ill condition who is obliged to borrow every thing she wants.

Now, if she would be finer than the rest of her neighbour's, it is the husband's reputation, and that must give him pleasure. Good housewifery and right management make things last long. It is indeed the honour of men to see cleanliness, nor do they love holes in their stocking heels, nor that their ruffles should hang like bell ropes: and yet they scorn to set the least stitch in them themselves. So, therefore to have a wife that will take care to have every thing done for him, must needs be a pleasure to him: and what if sometimes she wants a Venetian carpet, or a little china ware, surely no man in his wits would quarrel with his wife about such trifles, when all should redound to his reputation: nay suppose she has a mind for a filler coffee or teapot, or a pair of silver sconces, where is the harm of it? Certainly, the more plate a man has, the richer he is: this ought therefore to be a pleasure to him. And I can assure you, of my own knowledge, there are several husbands would be glad their wives had such things. Besides such things set out a room, and make the kitchen, if the house be kept



clean, have a reputation among the neighbours. 'There's such a one's house looks like a paradise says one.—It would do one's heart good to look at it, cries another. And all will grant it is the most provident way for a man to spend but little abroad, and keep the better house at home; and if so, he may well permit his wife to entertain her friends now and then without prejudice to her husband's estate; for a glass of wine tastes as well at home as abroad; and a capon may be cheaper dressed in his own kitchen than at a French ordinary. And, as for women wearing fine clothes, which some object against, I say it is for the honour of the nation in general, and must be a particular pleasure to the husband to see his wife as fine as her neighbours.

But there is another pleasure attends upon matrimony, and that is, if he has married a wife who has got a relation in the country, and it is ten to one but she has, for women do not rise out of the earth like pompions, but their pedigree has somewhere or other a beginning. If the woman has not, perhaps the man has. And whether their relations be by the

man or the woman it is no matter; and therefore, when they have once contracted matrimony, all their relations must be acquainted with it. And in return, they must send up a letter, whereon they tell him, they shall be very glad to see them both in the country.

Upon this, she willing to see her friends before her lying in, for we will suppose her to be with child already, and the man is no less ambitious to let his kindred see his nice choice.—And let us suppose the young man should have a mind to give his wife an airing in the country, marry, I think it is a pleasure to him to take a frisk in the country for a month or two, and then to have the four bells in the steeple set a jingling for joy, to summon the inhabitants of the village, to stare at the bride and bridegroom.

And when they have been grandly entertained by one cousin, to make a tour to another, and there to have all the welcomes renewed again, must needs be a marvellous pleasure to them both, and more especially to the husband, to see his wife so carressed and made much of among his friends.

But perhaps, after-all this great pleasure, there is a sad complaint that the young woman is not yet with child.

This much redounds to the young man's disgrace, and is a very great damp to the pleasures of matrimony.—But hold! not so fast, my friend; pray let all things be well considered, and the hare's foot set against the goose's giblets, for if there be no children there is the less charge. And yet the pleasures of the bed are still the same. They live in the constant use of the means, and who can tell what may come of it. Rome was not built in one day. I doubt not but it is an allay to many one's nocturnal pleasures, to think upon the charge he is bringing upon himself, by satisfying a little amorous itch; but when he had done it and done it, and done it again, and finds there is no danger, then he falls to it without fear or wits. Besides, there is another conveniency, they may live more plentifully, here are no portions to provide for children: when others are forced to sell part, and sometimes all their patrimony, to provide portions for their children.

But all this does not satisfy the young woman. She fancies there is some peculiar pleasure when a child is gotten, and she longs to know it. And what makes her the more eager is, she is upbraided by her neighbours. What! says one prating gossip, are you not ready yet, neighbour? No, nothing like it, nor towards it, as I know of. Lack-a-day! cries she again, I han't been married thirteen months, and yet this child is a quarter old. Aye, says the young woman, with a sigh, you have bestowed your time well: I have been married near eight months, and yet there is no sign of any thing coming. She had scarce spoke, before another gossip laid hold of the last words: How! said she, married near eight months and nothing coming! believe me, there's a fault on one side or the other: Do you think one of my age and complexion can be in the fault? I know myself so well, that I will leave all the world to judge of me. Patience a little, cries another of the gang, I have known some women have not been with child, till they have been married two or three years. What! and you would have me stay so long, I war-



rant you ; but I will assure you neighbour you are mistaken. Just in the middle of this confabulation, in comes another, and tells them she had been at Mrs. Breedwell's living in. How! says another, is my neighbour Breedwell brought to-bed? Yes, of a fine lusty boy, replies the other. How long has she been married? says the young woman. About eight months replies the other. Adds heartiken! cried she, about eight months! Why, I have been married so long myself, and do not know I am yet with child.

This curious debate held them a long time, and had not been ended so soon, had not one who was somewhat wiser than the rest come in, and, addressing herself to the complainant, she said, Mistress, this case is difficult, but the best way is to receive satisfaction is to go home, and take an exact dimension of your husband's instrument, as to length and compass, and then we may be able to form a better judgement; but till then we can say nothing positive. Another advised her to make much of him, and nourish him up well with yolks of eggs, oysters, rock-stones, craw-fish, lobsters, perri-

winkles, beef, marrow, shirrets, with some muscadine or tent. The young woman heard all this; but imagined all her cost would be thrown away, if she had not her full measure; and accordingly produced it the next time of meeting, which, as they surveyed, filled them with admiration, which one of them expressed in this manner; neighbour, there is some other cause why you are not got with child: if this be the right measure, I do swear your husband is a man every inch of him, and therefore must needs tell you that the fault is not in him. I know not how it is, said the young woman, very disconsolately, but I am sure I have given the exactest and truest measure.— But, that the woman might not be cast down, Come, come, said one of the good natured creatures, who was for forwarding the business, do not be cast down but use means, and you may yet have children enough: for I know a young married couple just in your case. And, by the advice of a worthy and learned physician, the wife was got with child very effectually. And this was the whole process of the business:

The doctor advised the husband to go into the country, and stay with his uncle for a fortnight, and then return home: but he ordered it so, that the last day's journey might be an easy one; and the wife had notice of his coming she dressed herself in all the gaiety she could devise; and had a good supper of light digestion, ready to put on the table at his arrival; exposing to his view her fine ivory neck and lily bosom bare. And three hours after supper she counselled him to bed, here to take his rest awhile. Then being both awake, he laid his hand upon the mount of Venus, and talked to her all the soft things which love could dictate to him; and when he by such amorous discourses, had wrought his spirits up to the highest pitch, then to fall on, and feast himself with love's delightful dainties. In short, the doctor's counsel was observed with a nicety, and the success answered their expectations; and not themselves alone, but others too have found its efficacious effects.

Now tell me all ye enemies to Marriage, what pleasure can a man imagine is greater than for a man thus to give his

wife and himself a secret and mutual satisfaction.

You will be apt to say, are these all the pleasures of matrimony? I answer, No; not one tenth part of them:—but my design is to delight, not to surfeit you.

FINIS.