ting about among dukes and duchesses in Londen, and singing to them his Fenian war songs. Croker made fun of Lord John Russell's "Life of Moore" in the *Quarterly;* yet "Dear Bessie" contributed greatly to the poet's happiness, and tended him with devoted affection during the lingering illness which ended in his death. But the married life of Thomas Hood, with whom life was almost a continual matrydom, was one of the happiest of all. His wife ministered to him in his sickness, comforted him in his sorrows, and made his domestic life as happy as possible under very unhappy circumstances. But for his marriage, Hood always affirmed that he never would have accomlished anything. In one of his warm hearted letters to his wife he said—"I never was anything, dearest, till I knew you; and I have been a better, happier, and more prosperous man ever since. Lay by that truth in lavender, sweetest, and remind me of it when I fail."

The marriages of some men of genius are very strange. Those of Balzac and Lamartine ware singular. When Balzac was at the zenith of his fame, he was travelling in Switzerland, and had arrived at his inn at the very moment when the Prince and Princess Hanski were leaving it. Balzac was ushered into the room which they had just vacated, and was disturbed by the sudden entry of the Princess, who came to ask for a book which she had left on the window-seat, where Balzac was sitting. She intimated that the book in question was the pocket edition of *Balzac's Works,* adding that she never travelled without it. Fifteen years passed, during which a literary correspondence passed between the Princess and Balzac; till atlength a letter arrived from her of a more directly personal tendency. It contained the announcement of the death of her husband the Prince, and intimated that she felt bound to requite him for his liberality, and determined to give him a successor in the person of Balzac himself! The delighted author wanted

not a second summons. He set out at once for her chateau on the Rhine, where they were happily married, amidst a succession of splendid *fetes* to celebrate the auspicious event. Lamartine also married an English lady of considerable property, whose maiden name was Birch. She had become passionately enamored of the poet, from the perusal of his *Meditations*; and, becoming aware of the embarrassed state of his affairs, wrote to him and tended the bulk of her fortune. Touched with her remarkable generosity, he at once offered her his hand and heart, which were promptly accepted.

It would occupy too much space to give an account of men of genius who have been helped by their wives. Some of them have been described in another volume;* but to these may be added one or two others. Buffon did not marry until late in life—at the age of fifty-five; but he was most happy in his union with Mademoiselle de Saint Belin; who anxiously watched her husband's successive steps on the road to fame, and rejoiced in the honors which were conferred upon him by learned bodies and crowned heads at home and abroad. Niebuhr, the historian, was also greatly helped by his wife. She soothed, by the charm of her presence, the anxious irritability of his temperament and shared not merely his domestic interests but also his intellectual employments. It was with her that he first discussed every historical discovery, every political occurrence, and every novelty in literature. It was indeed for her pleasure and approbation that he labored when he was preparing works for the instruction of the world. A few days before her death, while holding her in his arms, he asked her if there was anything he could do for her sake. She replied with a look of unutterable love, "You shall finish your *History,* whether I live or die." That was her last desire.

Perhaps too much has been said about the married life

* *Character*, chap. xi.

of Thomas Carlyle. It has been painted in darker colors than it deserves; the shadows have been made as sombre as in a picture by Rembrandt. Jane Welsh desired to marry a man of genius rather than a doctor in an obscure country town, and she succeeded; but the marriage was not altogether to her liking. The pair had difficulties to encounter; they had to live on small means, arising from translations, lectures, and articles in the Reviews. But even these difficulties, when overcome by eventual success, must have been full of interest to both. At length Carlyle raised himself, and raised his wife, to the highest intellectual society. Was not that enough? No: they had both sharp tongues: they were querulous and irritable; and had too little regard for each other's feelings. Yet from Carlyle's letters, notwithstanding all that has been said about him, it would appear that he affectionately loved her. She also helped him in his work, and was as proud of his noble struggle and valiant triumph as any intellectual wife could have been. His last testimony to her memory was full of sympathy and tenderness.

When Dr. Paley was told by a friend of his wedded bliss, and that for forty years he had never had a home quarrel, he dryly asked the narrator. "Did you not find it very dull?" The traveller journeying over a dead level finds his task more irksome than if his route lay through an undulating country. The same is true of married life. Jane Welsh was much happier as the wife of Thomas Carlyle than as the wife of anybody else. Even Eugénie de Suërin confessed that at the bottom of every human soul there is "un peu de limon"—some sediment of evil, though in hers there was the smallest portion.

A comparison has been made between the married life of Carlyle and Hawthorne, to the advantage of the latter. But men are different, and authors are different. Carlyle could not have written Hawthorne's works, nor could Hawthorne have written Carlyle's. The men were different; their minds were different; their wives were different; their lives were different. Only Hawthorne could have written the *Scarlet Letter*; and only Carlyle could have written the *French Revolution*. These works grew out of themselves and were their masterpieces. Finally, let us remember that even authors, as well as authors' wives, cannot be perfect.

It is true, many a man marries who does not get a leal wife, and many a woman marries who does not get a leal husband. As for the women of modern society, who—to use the words of St. Paul—"learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle but busybodies, speaking the things which they ought not"—they are only the feeblest outcomes of a false civilization. They are incapable of love, still less of friendship. They are false in everything, from the paint on their cheek to the words in their mouth. The fashionable woman has no home, but an establishment; children, but no family; and a husband who is neither companion, friend, nor lover. Who can wonder that a man should be afraid to marry, and prefers to enjoy his club. "I cannot afford to marry," is a common saying, even with men of fair means, perhaps prospering in the world. He "cannot afford" what young ladies are pleased to call the necessities of life. He may be sufficiently self-denying to avoid marriage and keep himself pure; though he may be drawn into evil courses which end in misery or ruin. "Man can be bought with woman's beauty," says Haggard, "if it be beautiful enough, and woman's beauty can be ever bought with gold, if there be gold enough." The young lady marries the rich man who can give her what she desires in the way of luxury. But there is poison in the cup of pleasure, which ends in moral death.

Even when a young man gets "engaged," he does not

marry until he earns sufficient to establish a luxuriant home. Probably that time never arrives, and the engagement drags on from day to day, while happiness and comfort are alike sacrificed. Mrs. Gore defends the French, *mariage de convenance* because it does away with long engagements and marriages based on mutual affection. "Though much," she says, "may be urged against the wisdom of conventional marriages, yet after examining the domestic history of the higher classes in both countries, more especially when including in the investigation the condition of the single as well as the morality of the married, it will be seen that the question is more nicely balanced than a cursory glance would lead us to suppose."

If a man has gained a position that enables him to marry the person he loves—that is, a healthful, virtuous, and affectionate woman, let him marry; and if she has prudence and sense, she will conduct his domestic affairs with judgment, and enable him to enjoy his home with comfort. Young love, if true and zealous, will make early struggles wholesome and joyous. The united pair will go hand in hand together through life—sharing each other's joys and sorrows, hoping together, striving together, and prospering together. Wealth may be desirable, but it cannot purchase pleasures of the higher sort. It is the heart, taste, and intellect—thoughtfulness, forethought, and conduct—all founded on affection, which determine domestic happiness. A good maxim is: "Take short views, hope for the best, and trust in God." The happiest marriage, like good wine, takes years to come to perfection. Two minds and hearts have to become united with each other, and to really know each other—far more than in the days of their engagement and courtship. They will then find out each other's virtues, and very often each other's weaknesses. In the latter case, they will learn to bear and forbear, and to sacrifice self in the little matters

of life. Then will come, or ought to come, settled peace and tranquillity. As Jeremy Taylor says, it is in after years that "there be *many remembrances*, as well as things present, which establish love on a firm foundation." Love glorifies the prosaic by the light it casts backward; it tempers and subdues the future by the beams it casts forward. Even suffering tends to bind the married pair more firmly together. Sympathy is best taught by affliction. As the eastern proverb has it: "He who shakes the tree of sorrow is often sowing the seeds of joy."