

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

Jane Austen

*edited by Robert P. Irvine*

second edition



broadview editions

very well pourtrayed;—we fancy, that our authoress had Joseph Surface<sup>1</sup> before her eyes when she sketched it; as well as the lively Beatrice, when she drew the portrait of Elizabeth. Many such silly women as Mrs. Bennet may be found; and numerous parsons like Mr. Collins, who are every thing to every body; and servile in the extreme to their superiors. Mr. Collins is indeed a notable object.

The sentiments, which are dispersed over the work, do great credit to the *sense* and *sensibility* of the authoress. The line she draws between the prudent and the mercenary in matrimonial concerns, may be useful to our fair readers—therefore we extract the part.

[Quotes Volume II, Chapter IV, from “Mrs. Gardiner then rallied” to “shall be foolish” (pp. 159–60 in this edition).]

This also may serve as a specimen of the lively manner in which Elizabeth supports an argument.

We cannot conclude, without repeating our approbation of this performance, which rises very superior to any novel we have lately met with in the delineation of domestic scenes. Nor is there one character which appears flat, or obtrudes itself upon the notice of the readers with troublesome impertinence. There is not one person in the drama with whom we could readily dispense;—they have all their proper places; and fill their several stations, with great credit to themselves, and much satisfaction to the reader.

1 A superficially charming but cynical character in Richard Sheridan’s play *The School for Scandal* (1777).

## Appendix D: From the Conduct Books

### 1. From James Fordyce, D.D., *Sermons to Young Women*, 2 vols., 3rd ed., corrected (London: A. Miller and T. Cadell, J. Dodsley, and J. Payne, 1766)

[James Fordyce (1720–96) was a Presbyterian minister who left his native Scotland in 1760 to seek his fortune in London, in a period when it was possible for a clergyman possessed of both energy and “politeness” to shine in fashionable society. He retreated to the country in 1782, long after the collapse of his brother’s banking concerns had diminished his popularity, but the *Sermons to Young Women* are the product of his ascendancy.]

#### Volume I.

#### From Sermon I. On the Importance of the Female Sex, especially the Younger Part

When a daughter, it may be a favourite daughter, turns out unruly, foolish, wanton; when she disobeys her parents, disgraces her education, dishonours her sex, disappoints the hopes she had raised; when she throws herself away on a man unworthy of her, or if disposed, yet by his or her situation unqualified, to make her happy; what her parents in any of these cases must necessarily suffer, we may conjecture, they alone can feel.

The world, I know not how, overlooks in our sex a thousand irregularities, which it never forgives in yours; so that the honour and peace of a family are, in this view, much more dependant on the conduct of daughters than of sons; and one young lady going astray shall subject her relations to such discredit and distress, as the united good conduct of all her brothers and sisters, supposing them numerous, shall scarce ever be able to repair. But I press not any farther an argument so exceedingly plain. We can prognosticate nothing virtuous, nothing happy, concerning those wretched creatures of either sex, that do not feel for the satisfaction, ease, or honour of their parents.

Another and a principal source of your importance is the very great and extensive influence which you, in general, have with our sex. There is in female youth an attraction, which every man of the least sensibility must perceive. If assisted by beauty, it becomes in the first impression irresistible. Your power so far we do not affect to conceal. That He who made us meant it thus, is manifest from his having

power  
d. a.  
attempered our hearts to such emotions. Would to God you knew how to improve this power to its noblest ends! We should then rejoice to see it increased: then indeed it would be increased of course. Youth and beauty set off with sweetness and virtue, capacity and discretion—what have not they accomplished?

Far be it from me, my fair hearers, to damp your spirits, or to wish in the least to abridge your triumphs: on the contrary, by assisting you to direct, we would contribute to exalt and extend them. We are always sorry when we see them misplaced or abused; and—I was going to add, there is nothing is more common. To give them their just direction, is truly a nice point. Power, from whatever source derived, is always in danger of turning the head. It has turned many an old one. What then shall become of a young woman, placed on such a precipice? What can balance or preserve her, but sobriety and caution, a good providence, and good advice?

There are few young women who do not appear agreeable in the eyes of some men. And what might not be done by the greater part of you do to secure solid esteem, and to promote general reformation, among our sex? Are such objects unworthy of your pursuit? or will ye say, that those which frequently engage it are of superior or equal importance?

If men discover that you study to captivate them by an outside only, or by little frivolous arts, there are, it must be confessed, many of them who will rejoice at the discovery; and while they themselves seem taken by the lure, they will endeavour in reality to make you their prey. Some more sentimental spirits, who might be dazzled in the beginning, will be soon disabused; and a few more honourable characters will scorn to take advantage of your folly. Folly most undoubtedly it is, by a wrong application of your force, to lose the substance for the shadow.

Now and then a giddy youth may be caught. But what is the shallow admiration of an hundred such, or the smooth address of artful destroyers, to the heart-felt respect of men of worth and discernment, or the well-earned praise of reclaiming were it but one offender? I verily believe you might reclaim a multitude. I can hardly conceive that any man would be able to withstand the soft persuasion of your words, but chiefly of your looks and actions, habitually exerted on the side of goodness.

“Were Virtue,” said an ancient philosopher, “to appear amongst men in visible shape, what vehement desires would she enkindle!” Virtue exhibited without affectation by a lovely young person, of improved understanding and gentle manners, may be said to appear with the most alluring aspect, surrounded by the Graces; and that breast must be cold indeed which does not take fire at the sight!

power  
d. a.  
The influence of the sexes is, no doubt, reciprocal; but I must be of opinion, that yours is the greatest. How often have I seen a company of men who were disposed to be riotous, checked all at once into decency by the accidental entrance of an amiable woman; while her good sense and obliging deportment charmed them into at least a temporary conviction, that there is nothing so beautiful as female excellence, nothing so delightful as female conversation in its best form! Were such conviction frequently repeated, (and it would be frequently repeated, if such excellence and such conversation were more general) what might we not expect from it at last? In the mean time, it were easy to point out instances of the most evident reformation wrought on particular men, by their having happily conceived a passion for virtuous women: but among the least valuable of your sex, when have you known any that were amended by the society or example of the better part of ours?

To form the manners of men various causes contribute; but nothing, I apprehend, so much as the turn of the women with whom they converse. Those who are most conversant with women of virtue and understanding will be always found the most amiable characters, other circumstances being supposed alike. Such society, beyond every thing else, rubs off the corners that give many of our sex an ungracious roughness. It produces a polish more perfect, and more pleasing, than that which is received from a general commerce with the world. This last is often specious, but commonly superficial. The other is the result of gentler feelings, and a more elegant humanity: the heart itself is moulded; habits of undissembled courtesy are formed; a certain flowing urbanity is acquired; violent passions, rash oaths, coarse jests, indelicate language of every kind, are precluded and disrelished. Understanding and virtue, by being often contemplated in the most engaging lights, have a sort of assimilating power. I do not mean, that the men I speak of will become feminine; but their sentiments and deportment will contract a grace. Their principles will have nothing ferocious or forbidding; their affections will be chaste and soothing at the same instant. In their case the Gentleman, the Man of worth, the Christian, will all melt insensibly and sweetly into one another. How agreeable the composition!

[pp. 16–24]

#### From Sermon V. On Female Virtue, Friendship, and Conversation

The more intimate reciprocations of a close friendship are now, as you know, out of the question. That at your time of life you should be particularly fond of sprightly conversation, where all is enlivened and joyful,

and where Wisdom when allowed to enter puts on her gayest garb, is perfectly natural. To advise you against it were as weak, as it would be unfriendly. This sprightliness and freedom, when supported by sense, and chastened by decency, have always, I frankly acknowledge, appeared to me delightful. Dulness and insipidity, moroseness and rigour, are dead weights on every kind of social intercourse; nor will I conceal it from you that I wish, as much as any of you can do, to make my escape from them on all occasions. But tell me, my lively friends; when the heart overflows with gaiety, is there no danger of its bursting the proper bounds? Is not extreme vivacity a near borderer on folly? To prevent its breaking loose, and throwing itself into very serious inconveniencies, into a very hurtful conduct, will surely require the check of self-command. But how is that to be attained? By associating only with the fanciful, the vivacious, or the witty? Is hazard to be shunned by rushing into the field of battle? Or, to represent things at the best, is familiarity with Wisdom to be contracted most readily, where Wisdom appears most seldom? Would ye form habits of sobriety, a spirit of sedateness, no way inconsistent with innocent mirth, you must frequently resort to the company of the sober and the sedate. But will not these be chiefly found among such as are farther advanced in years than yourselves? Should not you be ambitious of profiting by their experience and knowledge? And will not a respect for superior age, when possessed of superior discretion, often prove a seasonable restraint on the wildness of more youthful sallies? "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise,"<sup>1</sup> said the wisest of mortals.<sup>2</sup> Is not the maxim equally applicable to women?

Will you give me leave on this occasion to mention, what is much to the honour of our sex, that all the most sensible and worthy of yours have ever professed a particular relish for the conversation of men of sense and worth? Such men, I presume, are attached to the society of such women beyond every thing else in this world. And when such circumstances favour, this mutual tendency cannot fail to be a rich source of mutual improvement. Was not such reciprocal aid a great part of Nature's intention in that mental and moral difference of sex, which she has marked by characters no less distinguishable than those that diversify their outward forms?

[pp. 172-75]

Having mentioned Wit, let me proceed to warn you against the affectation and the abuse of it. Here our text from the Colossians comes in with propriety, "Let your Speech be always with Grace, seasoned with

1 Proverbs 13:20: He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

2 King Solomon.

Salt."<sup>1</sup> These remarkable words were addressed to christians in general. They are considered by the best commentators, as an exhortation to that kind of converse, which, both for matter and manner, shall appear most graceful, and prove most acceptable; being tempered by courteousness and modesty, and seasoned with wisdom and discretion, that like salt will serve, at the same instant, to prevent its corruption and heighten its flavour. How beautiful this precept in itself! How useful and pleasing in the practice! How peculiarly fit to be practised by you, my female friends, on the turn of whose conversation and deportment so much depends to yourselves, and all about you! From what I have now to offer, it will be found likewise to come, with advantage, in aid of our leading doctrine; since there are not perhaps many worse foes to that of Sobriety of spirit, which we would still inculcate, than the abuse and affectation already mentioned.

It is not my design to gather up, if I could, the profusion of flowers that have been scattered by innumerable hands on this tempting theme; and by which those very hands have, in their own case, shown how difficult it is to resist the temptation. I would only observe, that the dangerous talent in question has been well compared to the dancing of a meteor, that blazes, allures, and misleads.<sup>2</sup> Most certainly it alone can never be a steady light; and too probably it is often a fatal one. Of those who have resigned themselves to its guidance, how few has it not betrayed into great indiscretions at least, by inflaming their thirst of applause; by rendering them little nice in their choice of company; by seducing them into strokes of satire, too offensive to the persons against whom they were levelled, not to be repelled upon the authors with full vengeance; and finally, by making them, in consequence of that heat which produces, and that vanity which fosters it, forgetful of those cool and moderate rules that ought to regulate their conduct!

A very few there may have been, endowed with judgment and temper sufficient to restrain them from indulging "the rash dexterity of wit," and to direct it to purposes equally agreeable and beneficial.<sup>3</sup> But one thing is certain, that witty men for the most part have had few friends, though many admirers. Their conversation has been courted, while their abilities have been feared, or their characters hated, or both. In truth the last indeed have seldom merited affection, even

1 Epistle to the Colossians 4:6: Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

2 Fordyce perhaps has in mind the apocalypse that closes the fourth and final book of Alexander Pope's *The Dunciad* (1742), 4.2.633-34: "Wit shoots in vain its momentary fires, / The meteor drops, and in a flash expires."

3 Pope, *An Essay on Man* (1733), Epistle II, l. 84.

when the first have excited esteem. Sometimes their hearts have been so bad, as at length to bring their heads into disgrace. At any rate, the faculty termed Wit is commonly looked upon with a suspicious eye, as a two-edged sword, from which not even the sacredness of friendship can secure. It is especially, I think, dreaded in women. In a Mrs. Rowe, I dare say, it was not.<sup>1</sup> To great brilliancy of imagination that female angel joined yet greater goodness of disposition; and never wrote, nor, as I have been told, was ever supposed to have said, in her whole life, an ill-natured, or even an indelicate thing. Of such a woman, with all her talents, none could be afraid. In her company, it must have been impossible not to feel respect; but then it would be like that, which the pious man entertains for a ministring spirit from heaven, a respect full of confidence and joy. If aught on earth can present the image of celestial excellence in its softest array, it is surely an Accomplished Woman, in whom purity and meekness, intelligence and modesty, mingle their charms. But when I speak on this subject, need I tell you, that men of the best sense have been usually averse to the thought of marrying a witty female?

You will probably tell me, they were afraid of being outshone; and some of them perhaps might be so. But I am apt to believe, that many of them acted on different motives. Men who understand the science of domestic happiness, know that its very first principle is ease. Of that indeed we grow fonder, in whatever condition, as we advance in life, and as the heat of youth abates. But we cannot be easy, where we are not safe. We are never safe in the company of a critic; and almost every wit is a critic by profession. In such company we are not at liberty to unbend ourselves. All must be the straining of study, or the anxiety of apprehension: how painful! Where the heart may not expand and open itself with freedom, farewell to real friendship, farewell to convivial delight! But to suffer this restraint at home, what misery! From the brandishings of wit in the hand of ill-nature, of imperious passion, or of unbounded vanity, who would not flee? But when that weapon is pointed at a husband, is it to be wondered if from his own house he takes shelter in the tavern? He sought a soft friend; he expected to be happy in a reasonable companion. He has found a perpetual satirist, or a self-sufficient prattler. How have I pitied such a man, when I have seen him in continual fear on his own account, and that of his friends, and for the poor lady herself; lest, in the run of her discourse, she should be guilty of some petulance, or some indiscretion, that would expose her and hurt them all! But take the matter at the best; there is still all the difference in the world between the entertainer of an

1 Elizabeth Rowe (1674–1737), author of poetry and epistolary fiction of a religious/moral/didactic nature.

evening, and a partner for life. Of the latter a sober mind, steady attachment, and gentle manners, joined to a good understanding, will ever be the chief recommendations; whereas the qualities that sparkle will be often sufficient for the former.

As to the affectation of wit, one can hardly say, whether it be most ridiculous or hurtful. The abuse of it, which we have been just considering, we are sometimes, perhaps too often, inclined to forgive, for the sake of that amusement which in spite of all the improprieties mentioned it yet affords. The other is universally contemptible and odious. Who is not shocked by the flippant impertinence of the self-conceited woman, that wants to dazzle by the supposed superiority of her powers? If you, my fair ones, have knowledge and capacity; let it be seen, by your not affecting to show them, that you have something much more valuable, humility and wisdom.

“Naked in nothing should a woman be,  
 “But veil her very wit with modesty.  
 “Let man discover, let not her display,  
 “But yield her charms of mind with sweet delay.”<sup>1</sup>

Must women then keep silence in the house, as well as in the church?<sup>2</sup> By no means. There may indeed be many cases, in which it will particularly become a young lady to observe the apostolic rule, “Be swift to hear, and slow to speak:”<sup>3</sup> but there are many too, wherein it will be no less fit, that with an unassuming air she should endeavour to support and enliven the conversation. It is the opinion of some, that girls should never speak before company, when their parents are present; and parents there are, so deficient in understanding, as to make this a rule. How then shall those girls learn to acquit themselves properly in their absence? It is hard if you cannot distinguish, and teach your daughters to distinguish, between good breeding and pertness, between an obliging study to please and an indecent desire to put themselves forward, between a laudable inquisitiveness and an improper curiosity. But this, I confess, is not the most common mistake in the education of young women; and they must permit me to say, that it were well if the generality of mothers were careful, by

1 Edward Young, *Love of Fame, the Universal Passion. In Seven Characteristical Satires*, 2nd ed. (Tonson, 1728), Satire VI, 2.107–10.

2 1 Corinthians 14:34–35: Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak: but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. / And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

3 James 1:19: Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

prudent instruction in private, to repress that talkative humour which runs away with so many of them, and never quits them all their life after, for want of being curbed in their early years. But what words can express the impertinence of a female tongue let loose into boundless loquacity? Nothing can be more stunning, except where a number of Fine Ladies open at once—Protect us, ye powers and gentleness and decorum, protect us from the disgust of such a scene—Ah! my dear hearers, if ye knew how terrible it appears to a male ear of the least delicacy, I think you would take care never to practise it.

[pp. 188–97]

2. From Dr. John Gregory, *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters*, 2nd ed. (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell; Edinburgh: W. Creech, 1774)

[John Gregory (1724–73), a medical doctor and thinker, followed the same path south to London from Scotland as Fordyce and moved in similar literary circles. He returned to take up the Chair of Medicine first at Aberdeen and then at Edinburgh. Gregory did not write *A Father's Legacy* with publication in mind; it was published after his death by his son.]

[Introduction]

MY DEAR GIRLS,

You had the misfortune to be deprived of your mother, at a time of life when you were insensitive of your loss, and could receive little benefit, either from her instruction, or her example.<sup>1</sup>—Before this comes to your hands, you will likewise have lost your father.

I have had many melancholy reflections on the forlorn and helpless situation you must be in, if it should please God to remove me from you, before you arrive at that period of life, when you will be able to think and act for yourselves. I know mankind too well. I know their falsehood, their dissipation, their coldness to all the duties of friendship and humanity. I know the little attention paid to helpless infancy.—You will meet with few friends disinterested enough to do you good offices, when you are incapable of making them any return, by contributing to their interest or their pleasure, or even to the gratification of their vanity.

I have been supported under the gloom naturally arising from these reflections, by a reliance on the goodness of that Providence which has

1 Gregory married Elizabeth Forbes in 1752; she died in 1761, leaving three sons and three daughters.

hitherto preserved you, and given me the most pleasing prospect of the goodness of your dispositions; and by the secret hope that your mother's virtues will entail a blessing on her children.

The anxiety I have for your happiness has made me resolve to throw together my sentiments relating to your future conduct in life. If I live for some years, you will receive them with much greater advantage, suited to your different geniuses and dispositions.<sup>1</sup> If I die sooner, you must receive them in this very imperfect manner,—the last proof of my affection.

You will all remember your father's fondness, when perhaps every other circumstance relating to him is forgotten. This remembrance, I hope, will induce you to give a serious attention to the advices I am now going to leave with you.—I can request this attention with the greater confidence, as my sentiments on the most interesting points that regard life and manners, were entirely correspondent to your mother's, whose judgment and taste I trusted much more than my own.

You must expect that the advices which I shall give you will be very imperfect, as there are many nameless delicacies, in female manners, of which none but a woman can judge.—You will have one advantage by attending to what I am going to leave with you; you will hear, at least for once in your lives, the genuine sentiments of a man who has no interest in flattering or deceiving you.—I shall throw my reflections together without any studied order, and shall only, to avoid confusion, range them under a few general heads.

You will see, in a little Treatise of mine just published,<sup>2</sup> in what an honourable point of view I have considered your sex; not as domestic drudges, or the slave of our pleasures, but as our companions and equals; as designed to soften our hearts and polish our manners; and, as Thomson finely says,

To raise the virtues, animate the bliss,  
And sweeten all the toils of human life.<sup>3</sup>

I shall not repeat what I have there said on this subject; and shall only observe, that from the view I have given of your natural charac-

- 1 "Genius" and "disposition" are near-synonyms here, both meaning "natural inclination; temperament" (*OED*).
- 2 *A Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man with Those of the Animal World* (J. Dodsley, 1766). Section II of this primer in the Scottish Enlightenment allocates women an important role in fostering the "Social Principle" by which individuals are attached to one another "by sympathy and affection" (87).
- 3 From James Thomson, *The Seasons* (1746), "Autumn," ll. 606 and 608.

ter and place in society, there arises a certain propriety of conduct peculiar to your sex. It is this peculiar propriety of female manners of which I intend to give you my sentiments, without touching on those general rules of conduct by which men and women are equally bound.

While I explain to you that system of conduct which I think will tend most to your honour and happiness, I shall, at the same time, endeavour to point out those virtues and accomplishments which render you most respectable and most amiable in the eyes of my own sex.

[pp. 1–8]

#### CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

One of the chief beauties in a female character is that modest reserve, that retiring delicacy, which avoids the public eye, and is disconcerted even at the gaze of admiration.—I do not wish you to be insensible to applause. If you were, you must become, if not worse, at least less amiable women. But you may be dazzled by that admiration, which yet rejoices your hearts.

When a girl ceases to blush, she has lost the most powerful charm of beauty. That extreme sensibility which it indicates, may be a weakness and incumbrance in our sex, as I have too often felt; but in yours it is peculiarly engaging. Pedants, who think themselves philosophers, ask why a woman should blush when she is conscious of no crime. It is a sufficient answer, that Nature has made you to blush when you are guilty of no fault, and has forced us to love you because you do so.—Blushing is so far from being necessarily an attendant on guilt, that it is the usual companion of innocence.

This modesty, which I think so essential in your sex, will naturally dispose you to be rather silent in company, especially in a large one.—People of sense and discernment will never mistake such silence for dulness. One may take a share in conversation without uttering a syllable. The expression in the countenance shews it; and this never escapes an observing eye.

I should be glad that you had an easy dignity in your behaviour at public places, but not that confident ease, that unabashed countenance, which seems to set the company at defiance.—If, while a gentleman is speaking to you, one of superior rank addresses you, do not let your eager attention and visible preference betray the flutter of your heart. Let your pride on this occasion preserve you from that meanness into which your vanity would sink you. Consider that you expose yourself to the ridicule of the company, and affront one gentleman, only to swell the triumph of another, who perhaps thinks he does you honour in speaking to you.

Converse with men even of the first rank with that dignified modesty which may prevent the approach of the most distant familiarity, and consequently prevent them from feeling themselves your superiors.

Wit is the most dangerous talent that you can possess. It must be guarded with great discretion and good-nature, otherwise it will create you many enemies. Wit is perfectly consistent with softness and delicacy; yet they are seldom found united. Wit is so flattering to vanity, that they who possess it become intoxicated, and lose all self-command.

Humour is a different quality. It will make your company much solicited; but be cautious how you indulge it.—It is often a great enemy to delicacy, and a still greater one to dignity of character. It may sometimes gain you applause, but will never procure you respect.

Be even cautious in displaying your good sense. It will be thought you assume a superiority over the rest of the company.—But if you happen to have any learning, keep it a profound secret, especially from the men, who generally look with a jealous and malignant eye on a woman of great parts, and cultivated understanding.<sup>1</sup>

A man of real genius<sup>2</sup> and candour is far superior to this meanness. But such a one will seldom fall in your way; and if by accident he should, do not be anxious to shew the full extent of your knowledge. If he has any opportunities of seeing you, he will soon discover it himself; and if you have any advantages of person or manner, and keep your own secret, he will probably give you credit for a great deal more than you possess.—The great art of pleasing in conversation consists in making the company pleased with themselves. You will more readily hear than talk yourselves into their good graces.

Beware of detraction, especially where your own sex are concerned. You are generally accused of being particularly addicted to this vice.—I think unjustly.—Men are fully as guilty of it when their interests interfere.—As your interests more frequently clash, and as your feelings are quicker than ours, your temptations to it are more frequent. For this reason, be particularly tender of the reputation of your own sex, especially when they happen to rival you in our regards. We look on this as the strongest proof of dignity and true greatness of mind.

1 In London the Gregorys had been friends with Edward (1692–1776) and Elizabeth (1718–1800) Montagu. Elizabeth was at the centre of a circle of aristocratic literary women known as the “bluestockings” or “bluestocking philosophers,” and this paragraph (picked out for criticism by Wollstonecraft: see Appendix G1, p. 403) may reflect male reactions to these women that Gregory encountered first-hand.

2 “Genius” here meaning “character, ability” (*OED*) rather than an exceptional talent of some kind.

Shew a compassionate sympathy to unfortunate women, especially to those who are rendered so by the villainy of men. Indulge a secret pleasure, I may say pride, in being the friends and refuge of the unhappy, but without the vanity of shewing it.

[pp. 26–34]

#### AMUSEMENTS

I would particularly recommend to you those exercises that oblige you to be much abroad in the open air, such as walking, and riding on horse-back. This will give vigour to your constitutions, and a bloom to your complexions. If you accustom yourselves to go abroad always in chairs and carriages, you will soon become so enervated, as to be unable to go out of doors without them. They are, like most articles of luxury, useful and agreeable when judiciously used; but when made habitual, they become both insipid and pernicious.

An attention to your health is a duty you owe to yourselves and to your friends. Bad health seldom fails to have an influence on the spirits and temper. The finest geniuses, the most delicate minds, have very frequently a correspondent delicacy of bodily constitution, which they are too apt to neglect. Their luxury lies in reading and late hours, equal enemies to health and beauty.

But though good health be one of the greatest blessings in life, never make a boast of it, but enjoy it in grateful silence. We so naturally associate the idea of female softness and delicacy with a correspondent delicacy of constitution, that when a woman speaks of her great strength, her extraordinary appetite, her ability to bear excessive fatigue, we recoil at the description in a way she is little aware of.

[pp. 48–51]

#### FRIENDSHIP, LOVE, MARRIAGE

People whose sentiments, and particularly whose tastes, correspond, naturally like to associate together, although neither of them have the most distant view of any further connection. But as this similarity of minds often gives rise to a more tender attachment than friendship, it will be prudent to keep a watchful eye over yourselves, lest your hearts become too far engaged before you are aware of it. At the same time, I do not think that your sex, at least in this part of the world, have much of that sensibility which disposes to such attachments. What is commonly called love among you is rather gratitude, and a partiality to the man who prefers you to the rest of your sex; and such a man you often marry, with little of either personal esteem or affection. Indeed, without an unusual share of natural sensibility, and very pecu-

liar good fortune, a woman in this country has very little probability of marrying for love.

It is a maxim laid down among you, and a very prudent one it is, That love is not to begin on your part, but is entirely to be the consequence of our attachment to you. Now, supposing a woman to have sense and taste, she will not find many men to whom she can possibly be supposed to bear any considerable share of esteem. Among these few, it is a very great chance if any of them distinguishes her particularly. Love, at least with us, is exceedingly capricious, and will not always fix where reason says it should. But supposing one of them should become particularly attached to her, it is still extremely improbable that he should be the man in the world her heart most approved of.

As, therefore, Nature has not given you that unlimited range in your choice which we enjoy, she has wisely and benevolently assigned to you a greater flexibility of taste on this subject. Some agreeable qualities recommend a gentleman to your common good liking and friendship. In the course of his acquaintance, he contracts an attachment to you. When you perceive it, it excites your gratitude; this gratitude rises into a preference, and this preference perhaps at last advances to some degree of attachment, especially if it meets with crosses and difficulties; for these, and a state of suspense, are very great incitements to attachment, and are the food of love in both sexes. If attachment was not excited in your sex in this manner, there is not one of a million of you that could ever marry with any degree of love.

[pp. 79–83]

His heart and his character will be improved in every respect by his attachment. His manners will become more gentle, and his conversation more agreeable; but diffidence and embarrassment will always make him appear to disadvantage in the company of his mistress. If the fascination continue long, it will totally depress his spirit, and extinguish every active, vigorous, and manly principle of his mind. You will find this subject beautifully and pathetically painted in Thomson's *Spring*.<sup>1</sup>

When you observe in a gentleman's behaviour these marks which have described above, reflect seriously what you are to do. If his attachment is agreeable to you, I leave you to do as nature, good sense, and delicacy, shall direct you. If you love him, let me advise you never to discover to him the full extent of your love, no not although you marry him. That sufficiently shews your preference; which is all he is

<sup>1</sup> Thomson, *The Seasons*, "Spring," ll. 1004–73, describes "the charming agonies of love" (1074).



intitled to know. If he has delicacy, he will ask for no stronger proof of your affection, for your sake; if he has sense, he will not ask it for his own. This is an unpleasant truth, but it is my duty to let you know it. Violent love cannot subsist, at least cannot be expressed, for any time together, on both sides; otherwise the certain consequence, however concealed, is satiety and disgust. Nature in this case has laid the reserve on you.

[pp. 86–88]

[In the event of unreciprocated attachment,] at least do not shun opportunities of letting him explain himself. If you do this, you act barbarously and unjustly. If he brings you to an explanation, give him a polite, but resolute and decisive answer. In whatever way you convey your sentiments to him, if he is a man of spirit and delicacy, he will give you no further trouble, nor apply to your friends for their intercession. This last is a method of courtship which every man of spirit will disdain.—He will never whine nor sue for your pity. That would mortify him almost as much as your scorn. In short, you may possibly break such a heart, but you can never bend it.—Great pride always accompanies delicacy, however concealed under the appearance of the utmost gentleness and modesty, and is the passion of all others the most difficult to conquer.

There is a case where a woman may coquette justifiably to the utmost verge which her conscience will allow. It is where a gentleman purposely declines to make his addresses, till such time as he thinks himself perfectly sure of her consent. This at bottom is intended to force a woman to give up the undoubted privilege of her sex, the privilege of refusing; it is intended to force her to explain herself, in effect, before the gentleman deigns to do it, and by this means to violate the modesty and delicacy of her sex, and to invert the clearest order of nature. All this sacrifice is proposed to be made merely to gratify a most despicable vanity in a man who would degrade the very woman whom he wishes to make his wife.

[pp. 91–93]

A woman, in this country, may easily prevent the first impressions of love, and every motive of prudence and delicacy should make her guard her heart against them, till such time as she has received the most convincing proofs of the attachment of a man of such merit, as will justify a reciprocal regard. Your hearts indeed may be shut inflexibly and permanently against all the merit a man can possess. That may be your misfortune, but cannot be your fault. In such a situation, you would be equally unjust to yourself and your lover, if you gave him

your hand when your heart revolted against him. But miserable will be your fate, if you allow an attachment to steal on you before you are sure of a return; or, what is infinitely worse, where there are wanting those qualities which alone can ensure happiness in a married state.

I know nothing that renders a woman more despicable, than her thinking it essential to happiness to be married. Besides the gross indelicacy of the sentiment, it is a false one, as thousands of women have experienced. But if it was true, the belief that it is so, and the consequent impatience to be married, is the most effectual way to prevent it.

You must not think from this, that I do not wish you to marry. On the contrary, I am of opinion, that you may attain a superior degree of happiness in a married state, to what you can possibly find in any other. I know the forlorn and unprotected situation of the old maid, the chagrin and peevishness which are apt to infect their tempers, and the great difficulty of making a transition with dignity and cheerfulness, from the period of youth, beauty, admiration, and respect, into the calm, silent, unnoticed retreat of declining years.

I see some unmarried women of active vigorous minds, and great vivacity of spirits, degrading themselves; sometimes by entering into a dissipated course of life, unsuitable to their years, and exposing themselves to the ridicule of girls, who might have been their grandchildren; sometimes by oppressing their acquaintances by impertinent instructions into their private affairs; and sometimes by being the propagators of scandal and defamation. All this is owing to an exuberant activity of spirit, which, if it had found employment at home, would have rendered them respectable and useful members of society.

I see other women, in the same situation, gentle, modest, blessed with sense, taste, delicacy, and every milder feminine virtue of the heart, but of weak spirits, bashful, and timid: I see such women sinking into obscurity and insignificance, and gradually losing every elegant accomplishment; for this evident reason, that they are not united to a partner who has sense, and worth, and taste, to know their value; one who is able to draw forth their concealed qualities, and shew them to advantage; who can give that support to their feeble spirits which they stand so much in need of; and who, by his affection and tenderness, might make such a woman happy in exerting every talent, and accomplishing herself in every elegant art that could contribute to his amusement.

In short, I am of opinion, that a married state, if entered into from proper motives of esteem and affection, will be the happiest for yourselves, make you most respectable in the eyes of the world, and the most useful members of society. But I confess I am not enough of a patriot to wish you to marry for the good of the public. I wish you to

marry for no other reason but to make yourselves happier. When I am so particular in my advices about your conduct, I own my heart beats with the fond hope of making you worthy the attachment of men who will deserve you, and be sensible of your merit. But Heaven forbid you should ever relinquish the ease and independence of a single life, to become the slaves of a fool or a tyrant's caprice.

[pp. 103–10]

## Appendix E: Domestic Tourism

1. From William Watts, *The Seats of the Nobility and Gentry. In a collection of the most interesting and picturesque views engraved by William Watts. With descriptions of each view* (Chelsea: William Watts, 1779)

[In contrast to William Bray's *Sketch of a Tour*, extracted below, it is very unlikely that anyone took Watts's *Seats of the Nobility* with them on a trip round the country: an expensively produced collection of engraved reproductions of paintings of country houses, it might have been bought as a souvenir of such a tour on one's return home. However, it taps into a more general curiosity on the part of the newly wealthy regarding the taste and lifestyles of an established élite with whom they could claim a common culture. In productions such as that of Watts, a professional printer and engraver, houses designed to express the power and wealth of an oligarchy are turned into aesthetic objects to be sold on the open market to a paying public.

It is in their appropriation of the signs of aristocratic power by a commercial middle class that books such as this prefigure Elizabeth Bennet's visit to Pemberley. I have selected Kedleston as my example of the epitome of late-eighteenth-century taste, situated as it is in the same county as Darcy's fictional pile and the subject of some interesting description in Bray's *Sketch*; but it is also the seat of a titled nobleman, which Pemberley is not, and one should not imagine Mr. Darcy's house to be built on anything like Kedleston's impressive scale.]