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THE JEFFERSONIAN.

WIFE MANAGEMENT;
OR
Mr. Oldflint in Search of a Wife.
BY C. J. CARWIN.

CHAPTER I.
In a pretty little village located in one of the Eastern States, which we shall designate as Bucktown, lived our hero, Mr. Geo. H. Oldflint. The village was in no striking particular, different from others of the same class. It had its churches, its public buildings, its schools of learning—its great and little men—its pretty and ugly women—and its male and female gossips—in the same proportion that others have them; but it also had that which is not often found elsewhere, an Oldflint, a unique character.

When quite young, Mr. Oldflint experienced all the ardor and romance of a first love. The object of his affection was a tall, symmetrically formed, black-eyed belle of Bucktown. He made suite energetically, and soon found himself the affianced of the proud beauty. Affairs moved on smoothly for a time; but by-and-by Mr. Oldflint discovered that his angel was really a human being, and, in attempting to control her in a trivial matter, he received his dismissal. It was relative to an affair of dress. He could not see the inappropriateness of her wearing a certain dress which pleased him on all occasions; and, on remonstrating with her one evening when she had refused to wear it at a certain party, the indignant lady gave him a final rejection. But our hero was a promising youth, and a general favorite with the Bucktown maidens; and he resolved to console himself for the loss of the dark-eyed belle by paying court to her rival for the palm of beauty in that town. Still Mr. Oldflint was destined to disappointment in his matrimonial pursuits. He had engaged himself; the day was appointed, and had nearly arrived for the consummation of his marriage, when he happened to discover his intended in the act of harshly treating a member of the felix species. From this he argued an irascible temper, and therefore broke off the match.

Most men would have become disheartened at so much ill-luck. But not so with Mr. Oldflint. He believed he could eventually find perfection among the fair ones of Bucktown; and he resolved to persevere. But the same ill success followed him; and finally he gave up all thought of marriage, and, with many a sigh at what he deemed the degeneration of womankind, settled down into old bachelorhood.

Years flew round, and still found the unfortunate man, a bachelor. He had arrived at the solid age of thirty. On the evening of that anniversary of his birth, he sat, in company with his particular friend, Mr. Pierepont Bluster, in the back room of his office. It was cold and dreary without, but the glowing stove, sparkling wine, and tempting bannanas, which they were enjoying, made them cheerful.

This particular friend of Oldflint's—Bluster—was a married man. Often had he labored with Oldflint to induce him to enter the matrimonial field, but hitherto his efforts had not even been attended to with complacency. Now the object of his regard displayed more tractableness.

"Well, Bluster," said Oldflint, in reply to some observation of that gentleman's, after the conversation on this topic had progressed a considerable time; "Well, Bluster, I own that I wouldn't object if I could find the proper person. But out of my acquaintances, there is but one whom I would not as lief hang myself as to take for a wife. And her I doubt."

"And I say again that if you wish to live like a human being," said Bluster, "have a comfortable home, a dutiful wife, and all those little nameless comforts, the absence of which cause you so much perplexity now, you must not hesitate on the plea of getting a proper person. What the devil is a proper person in your view, Oldflint? If a woman suits you before marriage, have no apprehension of what she may become after marriage; for then, if she does not turn out to your liking, it will be your own fault."

"I don't know what you mean," said Oldflint, "unless you wish me to take a woman with the temper of a tiger, in expectation that marriage, instead of giving her an opportunity to play it off on me, will serve only to make her as tractable as a lamb."

"I mean simply," replied Bluster, "that a woman has got to be broke in, just for instance, as you would break in a colt.—How can you expect them to become good wives before they know any thing about it?"

"Isn't it just as necessary the husband

should be broke in, as you call it, Bluster?"

"That's just what I want to do to you. I have had experience sufficient to enable me to teach you. Now, who is that lady?"

"Miss Matilda Jane Collins."

"Ah!" exclaimed Bluster, "she'll make a good wife. Why fear her?"

"Because," said Oldflint, hesitating, and looking very red in the face. "Because I'm afraid she'd try to wear the pants.—You know her sister, Brown's wife, has the upper hand of him; and that's what I hate in a woman, Bluster. She might turn out shiftless, lazy, unrefined! D—n me if I would stand that."

"Nonsense, Oldflint. Brown is only half a man—any woman could manage him; and she only displays good sense in taking the reins into her own hands."

"Well, perhaps I might as well run the risk now as ever. I'll consider the matter anyhow. I think I'll go it blind.—But if she should attempt to boss me!"

"Never fear, my dear fellow," said Bluster; "with the aid of my experience, you might venture on marriage with the most turbulent female in the village of Bucktown."

"I don't care about my wife being so handsome or accomplished; I don't want a wife for display. I want a woman who will give me all the enjoyments of domestic felicity, without its costing me any trouble or interfering in the least with my ordinary pursuits. This she may not expect to afford me. If she don't, I wish to know how to make her. Let me ascertain that, and I'll marry."

"Well, Oldflint, your wishes shall be gratified. Now, tell me what you think of me as a husband—of my wife—of our domestic felicity?"

"Why, you are happy, and satisfied with your condition, which is evidence enough of your good qualities as a husband; your wife is one of the neatest, best natured, most devoted little bodies I know of—just the thing for a wife; and, under these circumstances you enjoy domestic felicity."

"I do, Oldflint, that's a fact. But such a woman as she was when I got her! A dozen Matilda Jane Collines are no comparison—she was so difficult to manage. I thought to do it, just perhaps as you do, but 'twas no use; the more liberty I gave her, the more she'd take. It finally came to that pass that I seemed only a fixture in my own house. Now you see how it is. There's not a man in Bucktown that has a more obliging or obedient wife than I; but it's all owing to my training her; and you—you poor ignoramus—you imagine it's all done through kindness. Ha! ha! No, no, Oldflint. All those kind looks, and gentle attentions, as they're called, which husbands exhibit in public, are only for display—a kind of conventional formality. Its behind the scenes, in the private family circle, where you've got to go to understand the thing as it is. Now my wife, for a year or so after we married, had it all her own way; but by that time, I became heartily tired of playing the lover,—and"

"You put the pants on yourself, eh?"

"Didn't I, though! and haven't I got them on yet! This was the true kind of kindness. Women know that we're the strongest, and know the most; so when we set that way—when we command and don't entreat—they think we are only acting manly."

Bluster seemed to be in his element, and gave his friend a long discourse on the proper management of a wife. He finally wound up with—

"Come to-morrow evening to tea, and then we'll talk more on this matter."

Oldflint agreed to it, and then Bluster took his leave.

CHAPTER II.

In the afternoon of the following day, Mr. Oldflint sat alone in his office. He had spent the preceding night endeavoring to decide whether or not he should marry; so through the day, up to this time, had his mind been burdened with consideration of the all-important subject. He could not, for a moment, think of any other for that station, than Miss Matilda Jane Collins. And with regard to her, the only question was, whether he could "manage" her or not, as Mr. Bluster termed it. His revolving doubts were finally solved to that extent, that he wrote a note to the lady offering her his heart and hand. But he resolved not to dispatch it until the following morning.

He found much difficulty in getting up a note which pleased him. Before him, on the writing desk at which he sat, were numerous sheets of paper written over bearing evidence of this. Each was a declaration to the lady in question—thus much having been written ere he could word one which came up to his wishes.—That which he ultimately fixed upon, ran thus:

"I flatter myself that you will not be surprised at the declaration I am about to make. For years I had watched the development of your beauty, admired your many superior accomplishments, and above all, with most pleasing emotions observed the daily evidences of the noble heart you possess. And the more I have seen of you, the greater has my love grown for you. But I never dared till now to dream that such a lovely and accomplished being could be destined for me. Yet I know my love for you to be as great as men can entertain for woman and believing my happiness depends on being enabled, through life, to watch over and contribute to your own, I have de-

termined to assume, and dare everything to gain that summit of my earthly hopes. I have wealth, position, and fine prospects, all of which I lay at your feet—they being as nothing to me, unless you will condescend to share them. Accept me, madam, as your life's slave.

An early decision of my fate may relieve me from the harassing doubts in which I am now involved."

After having read and re-read this several times, he wrapped it carefully up and laid it away in a private drawer, and then wended his way to the store of Mr. Bluster.

CHAPTER III.

Arm-in-arm the two friends sauntered down the aristocratic street in which the mansion of Mr. Bluster was situated.

A little pale-faced woman, with a careworn visage, met them at the door. She proved to be Mrs. Bluster. Certainly one would not have thought she lacked for management. At one time she must have been beautiful—a woman pleasing to look upon. But now, it was too evident—she had much to be relieved of; it was that idea which struck the beholder—that her life was married by a denial of the relief which but one human being could afford; and he was a brute.

"Is tea ready?" was the frowning salutation of her lord.

"You ordered it at four, and it is only three now," she answered demurely.

"Oh! ha! right," he exclaimed. "Well, at four to a second, my love."

A sovereign welcoming to his dominions a neighboring potentate, could not have done it more majestically than Mr. Bluster waived his friend to a seat in the drawing-room.

Mrs. Bluster having withdrawn, her lord thus addressed Mr. Oldflint.

"Did you notice her anxiety to please me, even in that little matter?"

"I did," replied Oldflint.

"That's the way to have a wife, Bluster then continued. 'And it's only exercising my rights in my own house. You've got to command to have implicit obedience, Oldflint."

"But what if your wife should refuse to obey you?" he asked.

"Refuse! Refuse! I'd like to see her get up so much spunk. Why, I've seen her tremble all over, like a leaf, just because I raised my voice above the ordinary pitch. Demeanor and the way you talk is everything. I can make my wife laugh or cry, merely by modulating my voice to the right key. And demeanor, that comes in play best when you're out among folks. One evening, two years after we were married, I recollect we were over to Warren's at a party. My wife used to be a good performer on the piano, and an excellent singer. But there was one tune which was a favorite with everybody. Morning, noon, and night, she was thumping it out of the piano here, till I became so sick of it, I just told her that if I heard it again, I'd throw the piano out of doors. And I would, too, for an example if nothing more. Well, at this party, they asked her to play it. She'd look at me, and then I'd put on a stern demeanor, and she'd refuse. Everybody asked her almost, and she wanted to do it; but my demeanor told her plainer than words, not to, and she dared not."

"Now, I should think it cost you a good deal of trouble," said Oldflint. "You've got the matter reduced to such a science."

"No trouble at all," replied Bluster, "at first it was a little perplexing, but now it comes natural. I always say, my dear—my love—or something of that sort; but she knows by my looks exactly what I mean, even if I address her as an angel. Not long ago, my brother and his family were here, making us a visit. He's a kind of a milk-and-water husband—let's his wife do about as she pleases.—Well, my wife saw what airs my broker's wife put on, and hang me if she didn't put some on too. But I took her down nice. Ha! ha! They told of a circumstance which happened in their town—A man with a lovely and interesting wife, took to drinking hard, and soon run his property through. His wife left him.—Now they all thought that this wife's desertion of her husband was right—even my wife had the boldness to take that side. And not only that, but in the most brazen manner she looked me square in the face and said, that if every wife would act with as much spirit as that woman had, there would be fewer tyrant husbands."

"My love," said I, in the sweetest tones I could but with such a look at her, 'my love, do you really mean to advocate such a monstrous doctrine—a doctrine which, if carried out, would render society a perfect chaos?' And as sure as I'm a living man, she hadn't courage enough to say another word."

At this juncture tea was announced.—Mr. Bluster felt the great importance of showing his friend how a wife could be managed, and he resolved the present occasion should afford him an opportunity.

They sat down to the table, and tea was dealt out.

"My dear," said Bluster tasting his tea, "you've actually got my tea too hot."

Oldflint thought his, if any thing, too cold; and wondered at Mr. B's peculiar taste; but a wink from that redoubtable gentleman gave him to understand that he was about to furnish him with an example of managing a wife. Expecting soon to have to exercise his own powers in that direction, he watched him with interest.

In trembling haste, Mrs. Bluster applied cold water to her lord's tea.

"Not so much, my dear he exclaimed impatiently. Then tasting it, and with a stern demeanor, as he would probably have called it, he continued, 'I declare you've made it perfectly cold.'

Another moment and the lady had a fresh cup before him. But this was as unsatisfactory as the former. Repeated trials to please him with like success followed. At length the petty tyrant, tho' he read satisfaction in the admiring eyes of Oldflint, and desisted his petty persecution.

In high glee with himself, the model of wife-managers finished his meal, and the two betook themselves again to the drawing room, much to the relief of the meek Mrs. Bluster.

"Now I think I have given you a specimen," said Bluster, as soon as they were seated, "of the manner in which a turbulent woman can be managed. But if you want more, you shall have it."

"No more!" exclaimed Oldflint eagerly. But really," he continued, "I never had the slightest idea that your wife needed so much managing."

Oldflint couldn't help pitying the unhappy Mrs. Bluster. He rose in consideration with himself, as he thought how easily a woman with such meek looks, so sorrowful a countenance, and eager, instant obedience could be managed.—

"Yes," he said inwardly, "a little treatment of that kind, just to show her how unhappy I can make her, and then kindness will be appreciated, is the course I'll adopt with my wife."

"Why, I tell you it comes perfectly natural," said Bluster, in reply to Oldflint's observation. "This is only a specimen of what occurs every day. But then most young people, as you do, who don't know anything about marriage, would think the devil to pay if they knew it; so you see we married men have to appear what they call kind husbands, in public. But they all do the same after marriage. There's to be a head to the family, and a man that's got any spunk in him, takes the position himself."

"Well, Bluster I'm perfectly satisfied, and much obliged to you for the enlightenment on this point you have given me.—If I had been aware years ago that wives could be brought so completely in subjection to their husbands, I should have done this, because I now see plainly that in whatever a woman differs after, from what she was before marriage, it is all the husband's fault."

"Exactly, my dear fellow. That's it. One woman's about as good as another, if you only understand their nature, and above all, know how to manage them.—So you will marry now."

"I shall propose to-morrow morning," replied Oldflint, "and as soon as the fair lady consents, lead her to the altar."

"Yes, you'll have to get her consent now; but by-and-by, the angelic creature will have to walk chalk. Eh, Oldflint."

"I certainly mean to have something to say then," replied he with a grin.

This closed their conference, and Oldflint left the residence, of his friend, pondering on his fine prospects of domestic felicity. Much to his joy, the following evening found him an engaged man.

Miss Matilda Jane Collins had not hesitated in accepting him. He was a man who stood well in his profession, was reputed a man of wealth, and was supposed never to have been jilted. He was, too, an admirer of the fair sex, and his attentions were always received with pleasure by the Bucktown maidens. In addition to this, Miss Matilda Jane had long entertained a liking for him, and in the hope that he would eventually offer himself, had declined several favorable matrimonial alliances.

The fair lady named an early day, and soon the denizens of Bucktown rejoiced in the presence among them of a Mrs. Oldflint.

CHAPTER IV.

A brief year of wedded bliss passed over the heads of Mr. and Mrs. Oldflint, and found them pleased with each other. Mr. Oldflint loved his wife tenderly and took delight in seeing her admired; and she strove to gratify her every wish; and thus his first twelve months of matrimonial existence flowed on, undarkened by a single cloud.

He and Bluster had met but little.—Home had been to him the storehouse whence he drew all his joys. Here he passed all his leisure time; and to his hither at the close of his days labor, had been the sweet solace of his close business tasks. Thus pleasantly occupied, his friends had been forgotten.

Before marriage he had been in the habit of meeting with a club for convivial purposes, of which Bluster was also a member. On marrying he had broken off his connection with it. This his former friends of course viewed with dissatisfaction.

"His wife won't let him!" was their observation, which finally reached his ears. He had a lurking wish to stand well in their opinion, and finally consented to Bluster's invitation to spend an evening at the club. Thus opened the second year of his marriage. His first attendance was but the prelude to others; and at length he was as regularly present as ever.

"No man can serve two masters," Oldflint found the attractions of home decrease as he often met his convivial companions. The wishes of his wife were

nothing to him now. If she remonstrated against his going out; he cared not for it. No show of interest in him—no exhibition of the pleasure she took in pleasing him—no evidence of the pain his disregard of her happiness gave her, had any effect on him. He seemed to consider that she, unloved and uncared for, must just as insidiously look after his domestic comforts, as when he made her happiness his chiefest study.

What wonder, then, that she, thus treated, grew apparently indifferent toward him. When he came to breakfast, it was either late or cold; when he hurried home with sharpened appetite to dinner, it was either not ready or only partially cooked; so with all his meals, and all those comforts he considered it should be the single end and aim of a wife to provide.

In this strain, Mr. Oldflint thought of "management," of Mr. Bluster's mode of operating; but, somehow or other, he stood in awe of his wife. He had never passed an angry word with her; and lately she had treated him with indifference—with calm dignity—as unmoved by his misdeeds and discomforts, as if he were the last person she could take interest in.

Mrs. Oldflint was what might be called a smart woman. She was affable, and courteous, and dignified as a queen. She was of an equanimous temper—nothing ruffled her. She was affectionate, knew well the likings and dislikings of her husband, and took pleasure in consulting them. She was also proud, and fully as capable of "managing" as her lord, though in a different way. She knew that what Oldflint had been the first year of their marriage—a good husband—he might again be "managed" to become. In short so well did she know Mr. Oldflint—his weaknesses—that she had resolved that it was necessary for his and her happiness that she should don the "pants" and she had too much sense to wear them otherwise than lightly. To make him conscious of the extent his happiness depended on her, was she now endeavoring to increase his unhappiness. She was determined to force him into an explanation or change of conduct, and then take the reins into her own hands. It was on this ground she changed her tactics.

CHAPTER V.

In the manner described in the last Chapter, continued the affairs of Mr. and Mrs. Oldflint to thrive for some weeks.—Gradually a change came over him; he came and went from the house regularly three times a day. He remained as short a time as possible. Toward Mrs. Oldflint he acted as if fearing reproof.—Noiselessly he shut the doors, lightly he trod the carpets, and swiftly he stepped from the gate on his departure. In the house he was always timid, reserved and silent. Outside, in his intercourse with his fellow townsmen, in his business transactions—in everything he set value upon—he strove to retain and recruit his confidence and courage by obtaining more than ordinary success—by acquiring unwonted respect—by enchanting the esteem of others for him; and when the time arrived for him to return, and he imagined himself as well loaded with confidence and assurance as to meet with a brazen front the accusing dignity of his wife, he would make the attempt; but it was no use.—The first glance of her sent all oozing out of his fingers ends; and Mr. Oldflint tho' a good deal. He thought how much better off he would have been had he never again resorted to the club. He feared that he was losing his wife's affections; he wanted to retreat, but he couldn't. He had taken the first step—had yielded to the influence of his companions, and neglected his wife. He hadn't the courage to take the right course—he dared not try management.

Finally he became intoxicated one night and was taken home insensible. Once or twice before he had been thus intoxicated; but then he was taken to a hotel. He arose the next morning with an aching head, and but half recovered from his intoxication, and found himself in his own house. Still he had sense enough to appreciate his condition. In this stupid state he noiselessly dressed himself, and carefully stole toward the back stairs.—He wished to get out without being seen by his wife. He reached and was passing out of the gate, when, like a clap of thunder, the voice of his wife fell on his startled ear. Breakfast was ready, she said, and you must come and partake of it.

Mr. Oldflint doubted his senses as he listened to his wife; but he returned.

Seated at the breakfast table, she was most kind in her attentions. "Is the coffee hot enough, my dear? Have another roll! Do the eggs suit you, my love!—How do you like the steak!" and similar questions poured in on the delighted Oldflint. His stupidity vanished, and like a romantic school-boy making his first confession of love to the mistress of his heart, did he, between blushes and grins, confess and obtain forgiveness of his wife.

Breakfast over, the happy couple retired to the little boudoir of Mrs. Oldflint.

Mr. Oldflint went not to his office that forenoon; he spent it with his wife. He told her a long story about himself—gave her the whole history of his connection with Bluster. He related, too, his many schemes for encouraging her, over which they both had a hearty laugh; and, to break off his intimacy with Bluster and never resume it again, he voluntarily promised.

They were happy; home resumed its empire over Oldflint, and continued its sway ever after. Years rolled on, and happy children gathered around his hearth stone. Reared in such a genial atmosphere, they become honorable and useful members of society.

CHAPTER VI.
Poor Mrs. Bluster! Often the unfortunate lady asked herself for what end fate had linked her to a brute. She was highly esteemed by her acquaintances—an honored member of a Christian community—and ever open to the appeals of charity. Her husband was not a scoundrel in the eyes of the world. The politician sought his influence—the Church his aid! He was reckoned a useful member of society; yet to one great end of existence, contributing to others' happiness, he proved as recreant as the criminal who fills a felon's cell, or swings from the gallows. He had destroyed her happiness, her interest in the world, by his "management." He went to all extents crossing her happiness. He scoffed at her religion, reviled her best friends, and outraged her purest sentiments, and thwarted her in the training of her children.—To hate him was natural; but what could she, a poor weak woman, do against such a pillar of society!

At length disease came, and prostrated Bluster on the sick-bed. The physician's skill availed him not. Gradually he sank until hope of his recovery failed. Then the minister was called in, and he sought to reconcile his soul with God.

Now the poor lady might have indulged revengful feelings, for her mighty tyrant was laid low. But, no. The approach of death made him confess the errors of the past, and seek the forgiveness of the injured women. Then she blotted her misery from existence—her long years of despair—and constantly and unwearily sought to relieve his sufferings.

Finally, he did the only good thing he ever did for her—he died.

No wife ever regretted her departed lord more than Mrs. Bluster. The deluded woman thought that if he had recovered, he would have proved the kindest and best of husbands.

Death proved her best friend; she lived and died a happy widow; and when the last sad scene of earth closed upon her, and put an end to her usefulness, the pious exclaimed, "A saint has gone to Heaven."

Singular and Extensive Claim.

We understand that during the last week writs in ejectment were served on a large number of our citizens resident and owning property in the western part of the city, at the suit of parties claiming property to the amount of several million of dollars. The claim, as we understood it, is made to embrace a number of blocks or solid squares, in the city, upon which are erected some of the finest and most costly buildings within it. The square from Tenth to Eleventh and from Walnut to Chestnut streets, including the assembly buildings; that from Seventeenth to Eighteenth and from Chestnut to Walnut street, embracing the most costly block which is solute right to convey, and that therefore the right of possession or title in this to be found on entire length of Walnut st.—and that from Nineteenth to Twentieth and from Chestnut to Walnut streets, which takes in the splendid palace of madame Rush, constitute, as we learn, the blocks claimed in the southern section of the city proper. It is also understood that corresponding blocks north of these, within the city limits, are claimed by the same parties, with various properties in other parts of the county.

The parties claiming as plaintiffs in the writ are Wm. L. Bostwick, James B. Bostwick, Wm. and Francis Mary Halstead, David and Margaretta G. Moore, Theodore Glenworth, and some twenty others, as heirs of the original proprietor. It is said the parties claim as the heirs of a person named Budden, who is said to have received title under Wm. Penn, and who died something more than a century since, leaving a widow as executrix. The widow, it appears, according to the allegations, had no power given her to sell any part of the estate of the deceased, and therefore made leases for ninety nine years, the longest time permitted by the law. These have now expired, and the heirs claim that no conveyance has ever been made by any party having an ab- sence amount of property in it, and not in the parties who hold it. What is likely to be the result of the matter it is of course difficult to determine.

We have frequently heard of wholesale claims of this character before—indeed there are, perhaps, but few properties in the city which have not at some time or other, been the subject of a litigation of a similar character, and whilst the results of a trial are for the most part postponed to an indefinite period, they serve perhaps only to bring doubt upon the titles of property heretofore considered of an undisputed character, subjecting the holder to a world of needless and vexatious annoyance.

The proceedings in question have given rise to a very considerable excitement in the neighborhoods effected by them, as stereotyped writs have been served in a wholesale manner.—Daily News.