

Unfortunately, though, no guarantee goes with the Wife that she will remain the same piece of goods the man has picked out, and it not infrequently happens that the one who was selected because of her figure develops into a feather bed, or an animated skeleton, while another, who was chosen because she was kind and gentle, becomes so cross and snappish that she is dangerous to be about.

Men also often discover that after they have picked out one kind of Wife that they prefer another type, but, as in all enlightened countries a matrimonial clearing house called a Divorce Court is maintained, this is a mere temporary inconvenience.

As has been stated, the Wife is a domestic animal, but she is by nature a foxy creature, who plays shy and wild, and the catching and taming of her is one of the choicest sports of mankind. In reality she belongs to the species of man-hunting animals. If man would leave her alone she would track him down, and nothing in natural history is a more interesting study than the cunning and art with which this apparently innocent little animal turns the pursuer. From her infancy she has been trained for the game, and she leads man a merry chase to the altar, where she allows herself to be captured.

In her habits the Wife is one of the most interesting of animals, and exhibits an amount of contradictions that keeps a man guessing as long as he lives. She is gregarious, and goes in flocks to hen clubs, where she amuses herself by drinking weak tea and listening to long winded papers out of an encyclopdæia on a subject which she knows nothing, and concerning which she cares less. She also enjoys seeing plays that make her weep and harrow up her soul.

She spends most of her time getting new clothes, and is never so happy as when she thinks she has a garment that will make the balance of the bunch miserable. Still more remarkable is the circumstance that she does not seem amenable to kindness, for she frequently deserts the good, kind master who worked his fingers to the bone to support her, while she will almost invariably follow the tyrant who beats her to the ends of the earth.