

MADISON JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO THE WELFARE OF MADISON PARISH.

TALLULAH MADISON PARISH, LA., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1884

TERMS: \$2.00 PER YEAR.

VOL. I. NO. 38

FOUR MOST PRECIOUS THINGS.

What the Chinese Consider Their Chief Articles of Value.

In China the "four most precious things" are the paper-plant, ink and its mace and the brush.

The hornet, whose sharp sting is the terror of children, is the recognized pioneer of paper-makers. Its cellular nest, on trees and rocks, is built of material which resembles the most delicate tissue paper.

Eighteen hundred years ago the Chinese, acting under the wisp's suggestion, made paper from fibrous matter reduced to pulp. Now, each province makes its own peculiar variety from the innermost bark of different trees. The young bamboo, which grows six or eight inches in a single night, is whitened, reduced to pulp in a mortar and sized with alum. From this pulp sheets of paper are made in a mould by hand. The celebrated Chinese rice paper, that so resembles woolen and silk fabrics, and on which are painted quaint birds and flowers, is manufactured from compressed pith, which is first cut spirally, by a keen knife into thin slices, six inches wide and twice as long.

Immense quantities of paper are used by the Chinese for a great variety of purposes. Funeral papers, or paper imitations of earthly things which they desire to bestow on departed friends, are buried over their graves. They use paper window frames, paper sliding doors and paper visiting cards a yard long. It is related that when a distinguished representative of the British government once visited Peking, several servants brought him a huge roll, which, when spread out over the large floor, proved to be the visiting card of the Chinese emperor.

The Leading-Strings Fallacy.

From the moment a child is born, he is treated on the principle that all his instincts are essentially wrong, that nature must be thwarted and counteracted in every possible way. He is strapped up in a contrivance that he would be glad to exchange for a straight-jacket, kept for hours in a position that prevents him from moving any limb of his body.

His first attempts at locomotion are checked; he is put leading-strings, he is carefully guarded from the outdoor world, from the air that would invigorate his lungs, from the sports that would develop his muscles. Hence, the peevishness, awkwardness and sickness of our young aristocrats. Poor people have no time to the imitate absurdities of their wealthy neighbors, and their children profit by what the model nurse would undoubtedly call neglect.

Indian babies are still better off. They are fed on bull-beef, and kicked around like young dogs; but they are not swaddled, they are not cradled, and not dosed with paregoric; they crawl around naked, and soon learn to keep out of the way; they are happy, they never cry.

If we would treat our youngsters in the same way, only substituting kisses and omelet for kicks and beef, they would afterward be hardier and stronger. Every week the newspapers tell us about tumbling down stairs and breaking both arms; boys falling from a fence and fracturing their collar bones. From what height would a young Conanche have to fall to break such bones—not to mention South Sea island children and young monkeys? The bones of an infant are plastic; letting it tumble and roll would harden the bone tissue; guarding it like a piece of brittle crockery makes its limbs as fragile as glass. Popular Science Monthly.

The Science of "Bunco."

"You talk as if bunco were a science," said a reporter to a "steerer" in the course of an interview.

"And isn't it a science? It's more'n theology and philosophy, and all the dogmas and omelettes chucked together. When a fellow's on my lay he's got to know everything. Understand! Everything. He has to know how to coax the fresh uns and luff the fly fellows and give all sorts of tarry to the cranks. He's got to have a ghost story that'll hold when anyone bites, and he's got to know just how to play his man."

"And which is the easiest prey?"

"Well, it used to be the greens, fresh from the country. I suppose you can get 'em on a string easy still. But the big bugs are the best to bait a trap for, and if you get 'em dead to rights they pay big money. Best of all, they're the safest game. You see, they don't care about squealing, 'cause they feel mean 'bout being touched. So they just stash their gab and let the ducks go. But often some fresh duck that's been touched for a small stake'll roar like a bull. I've seen it all and I know what I'm talkin' about."

"But aren't you afraid of running foul of men too clever for you among the better class of people?"

"Now when you begin to talk that way you'd better advertise yourself for a cow pasture. You're not green enough to mean it. Why, it's the most bangup men with the suggest headwork that's pie for us. Just yank along your tall thinkers and we'll take the conceit out of 'em in short order. Oscar Wilde, for instance? Bosh! That long-haired galoot wasn't a patch on the men we've tickled. And we come 'em, too, every time. If I cared about mentioning names, young fellow, I could give you a few items that would make some o' the swellstars a trifle and start a big hurrah in the best society that would stun you."

New York Herald.

In a Coral City.

"One of the most remarkable sights that I observed," remarked the diver, "were the coral beds. From a boat they present nothing unusual—a brown mass of pointed stems or branches; but one day I had the boat placed on the edge of a channel, and gradually walked down into it until I attained the bottom, and I tell you the scene was impressive. I

ON THE OUTSIDE.

Life in a Great City, and Its Consequent Masking of Conditions.

That attachment to the external is shown in the city's architecture. Nearly all the residences in the good quarters look well, if narrow, and are pretentious on the outside. Any one might be the abode of wealth and refinement, and the denotements are to this effect. A family of fortune and position may be neighbors to a family of unknown antecedents and entirely precarious income.

A widely-known millionaire may live across the street from a mysterious, suspicious character, whom he could not be persuaded to recognize. But, superficially, there is little difference between them. One carries himself as bravely as the other, and wears almost as fine feathers. There is an enormous difference, of course, though not in seeming, and it is seeming only for which the average New Yorker cares.

THE PROMINENT CITIZEN.

A Breezy Discussion of a Character which Everybody Will Recognize.

The "prominent citizen" that individual of negative virtues, so mindful of his own personality on public occasions; whose main object in life is to ride in the wake of popular characters, or to officiate as vice-president at every local assembly, or to perch, like an owl, solemn and dull, upon the brow of every enterprise set going in the community of which he is simply an ornamental member—should be suppressed. He is an "ancient and honorable" humbug. The objection to him is decidedly serious. He stands in the way of more useful, but less presumptuous men. It is not putting it too strongly to say that people, living at a distance from any of the great cities, obtain the idea from the papers of those cities that about a score of families in each comprise all there may be of social respectability, culture, wealth, intelligence and solidity in them.

These personages figure conspicuously in watering-places gossip, in the personal columns of their home papers, and form a part of the reporter's stock-in-trade. When the stranger visits any one of the cities referred to, he is astonished to find upon the front of great, substantial, prosperous-looking mercantile houses and manufactories signs bearing names which he has never seen in the papers of the town, and he naturally wonders if their owners are regarded as of no special account in the make-up of the city. He then inquires as to those "prominent citizens," only to find they have never done anything in particular to shed glory upon the city, that the wealth they may possess is employed simply for their own comfort, and that, while their names are so frequently observed in lists of reception committees and "among the notable people present," they rarely lead in charity subscriptions. His amazement, thereupon, naturally grows to see the very men who seem to own the great factories and mercantile houses—for instance: down in that wholesale quarter where everything is so solemn, so substantial and so formidable-looking—should be so entirely disregarded. Verily, he must speedily reach the conclusion that the substantial citizen does not belong to the delectable "prominent" coterie, and his conclusion would be in line with absolute truth.

The "prominent citizen" has no mission upon earth except to maintain his own notoriety as such, and he should therefore be easily dispensed with. His presence is a discouragement to the young and ambitious men of this community who are eager for opportunities to do something for the public good. He is constantly seeking and getting the best seat in the boat to the discomfort of those who have greater reason to be similarly favored. He always secures the most desirable positions on the stage of a convention hall, though attending only to show himself, while the men deeply interested are forced to clamor for admission to remote corners of the galleries. He is the most striking specimen of the American tuffhunter. He is always aggressively selfish. He never proposes, anything, but always seeks to get alongside of those who do. He is ever ready to sign petitions and to contribute his name, but he signs few checks and contributes little money. Altogether, he is a face that should be cut off. He fattens too much off the vitality of others, and, although he goes through life as a general make weight, his usefulness in that respect is easily dispensable for there are others who would be of greater value even in that capacity. Let these "prominent citizens" be sent into retirement. Their room is much more desirable than the company. Chicago Current.

Divorce and Morals.

But more than any alteration in the statutes, and the essays of publicists and the arguments of reformers, there is needed conscience in the contraction of marriage and a sense of duty, which statutes cannot make, in living within its obligations. The foolish and the silly will demand that, once married, man and woman shall be better and more nearly perfect than before wedlock. These will assume that by the ceremony of marriage a miracle is performed, suddenly changing human nature into the divine. Conscience and common sense are better than statutes, better than essays. No man and no woman should marry until able, out of love, or lacking love, out of a sense of duty, to so adapt themselves to their new relation that mutual sacrifice shall be its first and its permanent consequence. For such as these statutes of divorce will not be required.

It goes without saying that all laws tending to reduce drunkenness and licentiousness are directly in the interest of moral marriage and pure and happy domestic life. The man who finds the bar-room, the gambling table and the low resorts of a great city attractive is not likely to make the most just, refined and noble of husbands. Instead of enlarging the gates of conjugal separation, the hope of women lies in their making drinking and gambling and licentious-

THE STRANGE STORY OF MAGGIE BURTON OF MARYSBOROUGH, COUNTY QUEEN.

In the winter of 1830 a young woman was sent from Port Jervis to the county insane asylum near Goshen, N. Y., and he four-weeks-old infant to the county house. She was Mrs. Maggie Hart. Her maiden name was Maggie Burton. She ran away from her home in Rathlagne, Marysborough county Queen's Ireland, in 187 because her parents would not permit her to marry a dissolute lover named John Hart. She had an uncle living in Sullivan county, N. Y., a few miles from Lackawaxen station, on the Erie Railway. She had just money enough, on landing in New York to take her to her uncle's. She obtained work as a domestic in a Port Jervis family. She was a girl of good character, and was much liked by her employers.

A HAUNTED EXPRESS CAR.

Sights and Sounds that were Too Much for a Messenger.

Aaron Ross, the express messenger on the Central Pacific who recently made a demand for a new car, averring that the old one in which he had been on duty so long was haunted, sticks to it that he was not mistaken as to what he saw and heard in it. He is a brave and intelligent man, and the fullest credence is given the stories he tells. On two or three occasions, when attacked by robbers, he has shown such nerve that his employers would give him a new car every month rather than let him go. There are some bullet holes in old No. 5, and on the floor is a stain made by the blood of a man who was murdered in it one night several years ago. Concealed behind a pile of boxes at one end, Ross shot and killed a train robber last spring at Monticello, just as the bandit was forcing the door.

In talking about the case to-day Boss said: "I am usually alone in the car, and I make it a rule to go to sleep about 10 o'clock. One night about a month ago I was awakened at 12 by a crashing noise, as if a box had fallen down and been smashed to pieces. I got up and looked around. The train was moving along at the usual speed, and everything seemed all right. My lights were burning, and the safe was all right.

"The next time I went over that part of the road the noise woke me up again. Once more I got up and looked around, but I could see nothing. When I lay down and closed my eyes the crash came again and again. By this time I was a good deal mystified, but I concluded to pay no further attention to the noises, thinking that some time the cause would be clear to me. I heard them after that right along, but never even opened my eyes, until one night, about a fortnight ago, an unusually loud crash caused me to sit up and look around. At the other end of the car, standing up at my desk, with pen in hand, was the shadowy figure of a man. The train was in regular motion, and the doors were all locked and barred on the inside. I was wondering how anybody could get in, and at the same time reached for my rifle, which lay beside the bed. Suddenly the figure disappeared. I looked around, found nothing gave the thing up as a mystery, and kept it to myself. Two or three nights after this I saw the same thing half a dozen times during the night. Every time I opened my eyes there would be the man always at my desk writing. Well, I was getting uneasy, nervous, and fidgety, and I made up my mind that I wouldn't stand it any longer, so I put in a requisition for a new car. I ain't afraid of any man that ever walked, but I can't fight devil, and I know old No. 3 has a devil in her." Salt Lake Special.

A Painful Reminiscence.

They were talking here in New York of the wedding of Tweed's daughter several years ago. It is recalled because of the present run of singular weddings. Nobody remembers the name of the gentleman Miss Tweed married, but we cannot forget the wonderful wedding. Tweed was in the very glory of his reign and his only daughter was the pride of his heart; so, when she married, the presents were equal to those a princess receives. Her shoes were buckled with great solitaire diamonds. Her necklace was composed of priceless stones. Her hair was radiant in precious gems. Her waist and fingers were covered with diamonds of great value. Even her dress shone in glittering splendor. It was said at the time that her marriage gifts amounted to over \$100,000. To-day she shuns society; she makes no friends; she avoids the eye of curiosity. She seems to feel the degradation of her father though, poor woman, she had no more to do with it than you or I, dear reader. She gives nobody a chance to avoid her for she avoids everybody. It is next to impossible to make her acquaintance. She dresses luxuriously; her husband is rich, and does a prosperous and lucrative business in New Orleans. She wears diamonds, too, but I doubt that she wears those given her by the great contractors of New York at the time of her marriage. She is an invalid and suffers much. Her husband devotes his whole time to her and is still her lover. Albany Express.

Behold the Age of Vanity.

The girl with soft gray eyes and rippling brown hair, who walked all over your poor fluttering heart at the charity ball, has just finished a crazy quilt, containing 1,964 pieces of hat linings, put together with 21,800 stitches. And her poor old father fastens on his suspenders with a long nail, a piece of twine, a sharp stick and one regularly ordained button. This also is vanity. Burlington Hawkeye.

An Answer Admitting No Doubt.

"Do trains for Boston leave this depot?" inquired a traveler of a man whom he found lounging on the platform at a country station.

"Well," responded the rustic, "I have lived hereabouts nigh onto twenty years and I ain't seen none of them take it with 'em." Boston Post.

AN IRISH GIRL'S SAD FATE.

The Strange Story of Maggie Burton of Marysborough, County Queen.

In the winter of 1830 a young woman was sent from Port Jervis to the county insane asylum near Goshen, N. Y., and he four-weeks-old infant to the county house. She was Mrs. Maggie Hart. Her maiden name was Maggie Burton. She ran away from her home in Rathlagne, Marysborough county Queen's Ireland, in 187 because her parents would not permit her to marry a dissolute lover named John Hart. She had an uncle living in Sullivan county, N. Y., a few miles from Lackawaxen station, on the Erie Railway. She had just money enough, on landing in New York to take her to her uncle's. She obtained work as a domestic in a Port Jervis family. She was a girl of good character, and was much liked by her employers.

In the spring of 1877 she took a train on the Erie to go to Lackawaxen to visit her uncle's family. The train had nearly reached that place when the locomotive of a train passing on the east-bound track jumped the track when opposite the car in which Miss Burton was sitting and, striking it, completely turned it over and wrecked it. The girl was taken from the wreck unconscious. It was thought she was fatally injured. Her skull was broken so that the brain oozed from the fracture. She was taken to a hotel in Lackawaxen. Before a physician arrived so much of her brain had been lost that her death was momentarily expected. She remained unconscious for seven days, when she revived. She recognized objects and persons. The Erie Company engaged the best surgical aid to attend her. Her case was considered so remarkable that careful notes were taken of its progress, and it was reported in medical journals. In three months she was able to continue her journey. The company paid all her expenses and gave her \$1,000 in cash.

She returned to Ireland. Her lover was still unmarried. She married him, and resolved to return to America after a two months' stay in the old country, and bought tickets for herself and her husband and a younger sister. Her husband had a friend whom he was anxious to have accompany him to America. The two made up the story that the friend, Thomas Foster by name, was being hunted by officers for violation of the game laws. This story awakened the sympathy of the young wife, and she paid Foster's passage to America also.

On arriving here Hart was not able to obtain work at once. Mrs. Hart paid the way of the entire party to Lackawaxen, where she had hopes that her husband might obtain employment. He did not. Foster was also idle. The woman supported them all until her little fortune had dwindled to less than \$100.

In December, 1877, she succeeded in getting her husband work on the Erie Railway. He was to go to work the next week. The Sunday before that he and his wife and Foster were out walking. Mrs. Hart had all the money she had left in a purse in her cloak pocket. Hart expressed a fear that she might lose it. She handed it to him for safe keeping. When she called her husband to supper that night Foster told her that he had seen her husband and Foster. They had run away, leaving the poor woman penniless.

For weeks she and her sister lived on the charity of friends. Then they both procured positions. Mrs. Hart got a position in Fort Jervis. She had been there a year when her head began to trouble her. Her sufferings became so great that she was unable to work and became destitute. She was but 22 years old, and very attractive. In her friendless state and despair she consented to live with an employee of the Erie Railway. He cared for her until 1880, when she became a mother, and he deserted her. She became insane, and was placed in the insane asylum, and her child became a county charge.

After a stay of nearly two years in the asylum she was discharged as cured. She procured work in a farmer's family, and soon afterward took her child from the county house. A year ago, never having heard anything from her husband and believing him dead, she married a young Irish laborer. They soon afterward removed to the flagstone quarry near Hawley, Pa., where her husband had obtained work. A few days since she sent word to a friend living in village that her husband had received a letter from John Hart, her first husband, whom they had thought dead. He had heard in some way of her second marriage and her whereabouts, and had written her from Colorado that unless she sent him \$100 at once he would come East and have both her and her new husband imprisoned. The letter had unsettled her reason again, and she had become a raving maniac. The poor woman has been taken in charge by kind hands. It is not believed that Hart will ever present himself in the region. In the present mood of the quarrymen there it is said that he would be summarily dealt with.

A Slight Difference.

Judge David Davis, who for eight years rode the same judicial circuit in Illinois with Abraham Lincoln, related many capital anecdotes about him. One was a scene in court soon after Davis was appointed Judge, when Lincoln had defended a fellow named Lindsay, who had been indicted for highway robbery. Lindsay had pleaded guilty, in the hope that the court would give him the lightest sentence imposed by law. The crime, however, had no lenient features, and the character of its perpetrator was very bad. At the close of the term Lindsay was arraigned for sentence. The Judge alluded to the youth of the prisoner, and dwelt upon the enormity of his crime. He had robbed a helpless man of his hard-earned wages, and committed a crime that the law characterized as akin to murder. Gathering wrath as he proceeded, the Judge closed his philippic with the words: "Lindsay, I sentence you to seven years in the Illinois Legislature!"

THE MESSENGER BOYS.

How They Manage to Make Money Outside Regular Wages.

"How much?" The speaker was a well-known lawyer, who sat with two friends in the cafe at Delmonico's the other evening.

"Twenty cents, and you know it just as well as I do," answered the district messenger.

"Ain't you overcharging?" asked one of the party.

"No; we never overcharge regular customers. They know the rates, and if they did they'd report it to the company and we'd get bonned. Strangers and countrymen and newly-married couples always size up and charge double rates. And then, besides, regulars always give us something. One of them gives me ten cents extra every time; another one, who's a gambler on Twenty-eighth street, gives me according to his luck; sometimes as high as \$1.

Branch of Promise Suits.

Miss Fortescue, the alleged pretty actress, has given up the silly Lord Garmoyne, returned to him his silly letters and foregone her prospective claims to the Cairns coronet, in consideration of the payment to her of \$125,000. Everybody ought to be satisfied with this arrangement including Lord Garmoyne, but most of all of the long-suffering public; and if we mention the topic yet once more, it is solely with a view to making it the text for a brief dissertation upon the general subject of suits for breach of promise.

We are heartily in accord with the English Judge who, not long ago, expressed a fervent wish that the action for breach of promise might be abolished at once and utterly. This for very natural and, as we think, sound reasons. There are two cases where the right to sue should not be recognized. Where a man has been scoundrel enough to betray a loving and weak woman under promise of marriage it is the criminal law which should be invoked.

On the other hand, where the man is of such a poor stuff that he enters lightly into a contract of the most sacred and serious sort, and breaks it as lightly, we do not think that the matter is of sufficient importance to warrant the setting in motion of the whole machinery of the law. This for good reasons. The woman has suffered no loss through her failure to obtain such a husband; as it is altogether probable that she is as frivolous and faithless as himself.

As to another category of cases, where the man was worth having, and the woman was sincerely in love with him, and the match was broken off because he realized that the responsibilities of the projected union, and had doubts whether it would prove a happy one, there is no need here of the action for damages. The manly course is, while there is yet time, to withdraw from an engagement which means ultimate misery to two lives; and the womanly course is to permit such a withdrawal. In point of fact, in the great majority of cases the institution of a suit for breach of promise is prima facie evidence that the plaintiff's affections are not of a sort to suffer injury by the non-fulfillment of a matrimonial contract.

There remain the rare and exceptional cases where women of worth are contemptuously and heartlessly jilted by unscrupulous flirts, and here it seems to us that the ends of justice would be met by instituting the sound horse-whipping of the offender to a male relative or friend. We admire faithful and long-enduring love and chivalrous devotion, and are glad that Miss Fortescue is to "crown the flame" of the gentleman whom she threw over when the coronet was dangled before her nose. But we should not regard her previous faithlessness as having been atoned for and wiped out by her acquaintance with a soft-headed snob her parade before the scandal-loving population of two hemispheres, and her extensive transaction in documentary evidence that must have been of anything but an edifying character. Philadelphia Record.

CURRYCOMBS FOR COACHMEN.

Mrs. Belva Lockwood uses a tricycle, a precaution which certainly will prevent her from eloping with the coachman. Youkers Statesman.

Amateur coachmen are not tolerated in England, but a mate-to-his coachmen in this country are having a clean run. St. Paul Herald.

When a coachman hitches up with an heiress he takes her for wheel or whoa, but soon gets tired of her tongue and wants to kick over the traces. Detroit Times.

It does seem strange that a young lady should forego her chances of marrying a plumber just for the sake of the romance of eloping with a coachman. Lowell Citizen.

"Well," said R. S. Stockracy to his wife "another summer is gone and Mabel is still on our hands."

"Yes," said his wife, "she does not seem to be able to effect a marriage yet, but I have a plan."

"What is that?"

"We will a coachman hire." Marathon Independent.

The Milliner Explained.

"What will be the prevailing style in dresses?" asked a family man of a fashionable milliner.

"Well, dresses will be worn much shorter this year."

"I am glad to hear it," said the man of family, breathing a sigh of relief "I suppose they will be much cheaper?"

"By no means. They will cost more," said the milliner.

"I don't understand how that can be. Shorter dresses take less goods and should therefore cost less."

"No; you are wrong. Shorter dresses cost more because they come higher."

But the opurate family man would not be convinced.

The Raising of Farm Notes.

"My arrest is a foul outrage, and I shall make the authorities suffer for it?"

"What in heaven's name were you doing?"

"Absolutely nothing. I was engaged in work on my farm when the officers swooped down and captured me."

"H'm, yes. What do you raise on your farm?"

"Notes." Notes.

Handsome is that handsome does, will fit the coachmen, for they are all handsome men. Waterloo Observer.

Abraham Lincoln was a quiet

er. He arose with a quiet gleam of joy from his face, and said: "May I please your Honor, as the friend of the Constitution does not permit cruel and unusual punishment. Your Honor has sent this man to the Legislature when he ought to go to the penitentiary."

"The difference is so slight that the Court has no hesitation in adopting the suggestion of its learned and experienced advisor," the Judge responded. Thereupon he imposed the full sentence of the law, and everybody laughed except the defendant and his counsel. Ben Ferley Poore in Boston Budget.

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"No; we never overcharge regular customers. They know the rates, and if they did they'd report it to the company and we'd get bonned. Strangers and countrymen and newly-married couples always size up and charge double rates. And then, besides, regulars always give us something. One of them gives me ten cents extra every time; another one, who's a gambler on Twenty-eighth street, gives me according to his luck; sometimes as high as \$1.

Branch of Promise Suits.

Miss Fortescue, the alleged pretty actress, has given up the silly Lord Garmoyne, returned to him his silly letters and foregone her prospective claims to the Cairns coronet, in consideration of the payment to her of \$125,000. Everybody ought to be satisfied with this arrangement including Lord Garmoyne, but most of all of the long-suffering public; and if we mention the topic yet once more, it is solely with a view to making it the text for a brief dissertation upon the general subject of suits for breach of promise.

We are heartily in accord with the English Judge who, not long ago, expressed a fervent wish that the action for breach of promise might be abolished at once and utterly. This for very natural and, as we think, sound reasons. There are two cases where the right to sue should not be recognized. Where a man has been scoundrel enough to betray a loving and weak woman under promise of marriage it is the criminal law which should be invoked.

On the other hand, where the man is of such a poor stuff that he enters lightly into a contract of the most sacred and serious sort, and breaks it as lightly, we do not think that the matter is of sufficient importance to warrant the setting in motion of the whole machinery of the law. This for good reasons. The woman has suffered no loss through her failure to obtain such a husband; as it is altogether probable that she is as frivolous and faithless as himself.

As to another category of cases, where the man was worth having, and the woman was sincerely in love with him, and the match was broken off because he realized that the responsibilities of the projected union, and had doubts whether it would prove a happy one, there is no need here of the action for damages. The manly course is, while there is yet time, to withdraw from an engagement which means ultimate misery to two lives; and the womanly course is to permit such