

born for ourselves to live in pleasure, but to take pains and to labor for the good of our Country. Yet so delightful is our present sweetness that we never remember the following sour, for youth are too easy won and overcome with the world's vanities. Oh too soon, I say, is youth in the blossoms devoured with the caterpillars of foul lust and lascivious desires. The black Fiend of Hell by his enticing sweet sin of lust draws many young wits to confusion, for in time it draws the heart blood of your good names, and that, being once lost, is never gotten again.

Again, Lust causeth you to do such foul deeds which makes your foreheads forever afterwards seem spotted with black shame and everlasting infamy, by which means your graves after death are closed up with time's scandal. And yet women are easily wooed and soon won, got with an apple and lost with the paring. Young wits are soon corrupted; women's bright beauty breeds curious thoughts; and golden gifts easily overcome wantons' desires, with changing modesty into pastimes of vanity, and being once delighted therein, continues in the same without repentance.²⁹ You are only the people's wonder and misfortune's bandying ball tossed up and down the world with woe upon woe. Yea, ten thousand woes will be galloping hard at your heels and pursue you wheresoever you go. For those of ill report cannot stay long in one place but roam and wander about the world, and yet ever unfortunate, prospering in nothing, forsaken and cast out from all civil companies, still in fear lest authority with the sword of Justice bar them of liberty. Lo, thus your lives are despised, walking like night Owls in misery, and no comfort shall be your friend, but only repentance coming too late and overdear bought: a penance and punishment due to all such hated creatures as these are.

Therefore believe, all you unmarried wantons, and in believing, grieve that you have thus unluckily made yourselves neither maidens, widows, nor wives, but more vile than filthy channel dirt fit to be swept out of the heart and suburbs of your Country. Oh, then suffer not this world's pleasure to take from you the good thoughts of an honest life! But down, down upon your knees, you earthly Serpents, and wash away your black sin with the crystal tears of true sorrow and repentance, so that when you wander from this enticing world, you may be washed and cleansed from this foul leprosy of nature.

²⁹ Gifts easily turn women into wantons; once won, they continue in this life with no remorse.

Lo, thus in remorse of mind my tongue hath uttered to the wantons of the world the abundance of my heart's grief, which I have perceived by the unseemly behavior of unconstant both men and women. Yet men for the most part are touched but with one fault, which is drinking too much, but it is said of women that they have two faults: that is, they can neither say well nor yet do well.

For commonly women are the most part of the forenoon painting themselves, and frizzling their hairs, and prying in their glass like Apes to prank up themselves in their gaudies: like Puppets, or like the Spider which weaves a fine web to hang the fly. Amongst women, she is accounted a slut which goeth not in her silks. Therefore if thou wilt please thy Lady, thou must like and love, sue and serve, and in spending thou must lay on load. For they must have maintenance howsoever they get it, by hook or by crook, out of Judas's bag or the Devil's budget; thou must spare neither lands nor living, money nor gold.

[Women can find something to criticize in any man: if he is thrifty, he is a "pinchpenny"; if cautious, a "dastard"; if careless in dress, a "sloven." They will caress with one hand and steal with the other, depleting men's revenues to maintain their own "pomp and bravery." Men raise beasts and till the earth for some gainful purpose, but they gain nothing from women: "What labor or cost thou bestowest on a woman is all cast away, for she will yield thee no profit at all." Thus men are fools; they sell all they own for women and "bow at their beck and come at their calls," yet the women care "not a penny" for them. Many women are not even faithful, "holding up to all that come not much unlike a Barber's chair, that so soon as one knave is out another is in; a common hackney for everyone that will ride; a boat for everyone to row in." As soon as the money runs out, these women will leave, for "there is no love in them but from the teeth outward."]

[It is difficult to judge the true nature of a woman from her appearance, since "many women are in shape Angels but in qualities Devils, painted coffins with rotten bones." They are like old trees with fair green leaves and decaying trunks. They have myriad devices to entice, bewitch, and deceive men; "if God had not made them only to be a plague to men, he would never have called them necessary evils." Lewd women bring nothing but repentance; "they do rather spend and consume all that which man painfully getteth." Woman is "nothing else but a contrary unto man," and all the pens in the world would not enable men to catalogue all her deceptions.]

CHAPTER III. This third Chapter sheweth a remedy against love, also many reasons not to be hasty in choice of a Wife. But if no remedy but thou wilt marry, then how to choose a wife, with a Commendations of the good, virtuous, and honest women.

Be not hasty to marry, for doubt lest thou marry in haste and repent by leisure. For there are many troubles which cometh galloping at the heels of a woman, which many young men beforehand do not think of. The world is not all made of oatmeal, nor all is not gold that glitters, nor a smiling countenance is no certain testimonial of a merry heart, nor the way to heaven is not strewed with rushes, no more is the cradle of ease in a woman's lap. If thou wert a servant or in bondage before, yet when thou marriest, thy toil is never the near ended. But even then and not before, thou changest thy golden life which thou didst lead before, in respect of the married, for a drop of honey which quickly turneth to be as bitter as wormwood. And therefore far better it were to have two plows going than one cradle, and better a barn filled than a bed; therefore cut off the occasion which may any way bring thee into fool's paradise. Then first and above all shun Idleness, for idleness is the beginner and maintainer of love. Therefore apply thyself about some affairs or occupied about some business, for so long as thy mind or thy body is in labor, the love of a woman is not remembered nor lust never thought upon. But if thou spend thy time idly amongst women, thou art like unto him which playeth with the Bee, who may sooner feel of her sting than taste of her honey. He that toucheth pitch may be defiled therewith. Roses inadvicably gathered prickles our fingers; Bees ungently handled stings our faces. And yet the one is pleasant and the other is profitable. And if thou be in company of women, the Devil himself hath not more illusions to get men into his net than women have devices and inventions to allure men into their love. And if thou suffer thyself once to be led into fool's paradise (that is to say, the bed or closet³⁰ wherein a woman is), then I say thou art like a bird snared in a lime bush, which the more she striveth, the faster she is. It is impossible to fall amongst stones and not to be hurt, or amongst thorns and not be pricked, or amongst nettles and not be stung. A man cannot carry fire in his bosom and not burn his clothing; no more can a man live in love but it is a life as wearisome as hell, and he that mar-

30. Small, private chamber.

rieth a wife matcheth himself unto many troubles. If thou marriest a still and a quiet woman, that will seem to thee that thou ridest but an ambling horse to hell, but if one that is froward and unquiet, then thou wert as good ride a trotting horse to the devil. Herein I will not be my own carver,³¹ but I refer you to the judgment of those which have seen the troubles and felt the torments. For none are better able to judge of women's qualities than those which have them; none feels the hardness of the Flint but he that strikes it; none knows where the shoe pincheth but he that wears it. It is said that a man should eat a bushel of Salt with one which he means to make his friend before he put any great confidence or trust in him. And if thou be so long in choosing a friend, in my mind thou hadst need to eat two bushels of Salt with a woman before thou make her thy wife; otherwise, before thou hast eaten one bushel with her, thou shalt taste of ten quarters of sorrow, and for every dram of pleasure an ounce of pain, and for every pint of honey a gallon of gall, and for every inch of mirth an ell³² of moan. In the beginning, a woman's love seemeth delightful but endeth with destruction; therefore he that trusteth to the love of a woman shall be as sure as he that hangeth by the leaf of a tree in the later end of Summer.

[Swetnam advises men to avoid marriage altogether, for it will bring nothing but misery. He warns against marrying any of the six kinds of women: "good nor bad, fair nor foul, rich nor poor." A good wife will be quickly spoiled, and a bad wife will have to be supported in her wickedness. If the wife is fair, she must be watched continuously, "and if she be foul and loathsome, who can abide her?" A rich wife must be pampered, and a poor one maintained. "For if a woman be never so rich in dowry, happy by her good name, beautiful of body, sober of countenance, eloquent in speech, and adorned with virtue, yet they have one ill quality or other which overthroweth all the other, like unto that Cow which giveth great store of milk and presently striketh it down with her foot." Similarly, certain types of workmen can be discredited by a single fault ("which commonly in some men is drunkenness").]

It is said of men that they have that one fault, but of women it is said that they have two faults: that is to say, they can neither say well nor do well. There is a saying that goeth thus: that things far fetched and

31. I will not rely on my own discretion.

32. A unit of measure (45 inches).

dear bought are of us most dearly beloved. The like may be said of women; although many of them are not far fetched, yet they are dear bought, yea and so dear that many a man curseth his hard penny-worths and bans³³ his own heart. For the pleasure of the fairest woman in the world lasteth but a honeymoon; that is, while a man hath glutted his affections and reaped the first fruit, his pleasure being past, sorrow and repentance remaineth still with him.

Therefore to make thee the stronger to strive against these tame Serpents, thou shalt have more strings to thy bow than one; it is safe riding at two anchors. Always look before thou leap lest thy shins thou chance to break. Now the fire is kindled; let us burn this other faggot and so to our matter again.

If a woman be never so comely, think her a counterfeit; if never so straight, think her crooked; if she be well set, call her a boss;³⁴ if slender, a hazel twig; if brown, think her as black as a crow; if well colored, a painted wall; if sad or shamefaced, then think her a clown; if merry and pleasant, then she is the liker to be a wanton. But if thou be such a fool that thou wilt spend thy time and treasure, the one in the love of women and the other to delight them, in my mind thou resemblest the simple Indians, who apparel themselves most richly when they go to be burned.

But what should I say? Some will not give their babble for the Tower of London.³⁵ He that hath sailed at sea hath seen the dangers, and he that is married can tell of his own woe, but he that was never burnt will never dread the fire. Some will go to dice although they see others lose all their money at play, and some will marry though they beg together. Is it not strange that men should be so foolish to dote on women, who differ so far in nature from men? For a man delights in arms and in hearing the rattling drums, but a woman loves to hear sweet music on the Lute, Cittern, or Bandore.³⁶ A man rejoiceth to march among the murdered carcasses, but a woman to dance on a silken carpet; a man loves to hear the threatnings of his Prince's enemies, but a woman weeps when she hears of wars. A man loves to lie

33. Chides, curses.

34. A fat woman.

35. Some men would risk imprisonment in the Tower of London rather than relinquish women's babble. This may also be a pun on the biblical tower of Babel.

36. Stringed instruments.

on the cold grass, but a woman must be wrapped in warm mantles; a man triumphs at wars, but a woman rejoiceth more at peace.

If a man talk of any kind of beast or fowl, presently the nature is known, as for example: the Lions are all strong and hardy; the Hares are all fearful and cowardly; the Doves are all simple; and so of all beasts and fowl the like (I mean few or none swerving from his kind). But women have more contrary sorts of behavior than there be women, and therefore impossible for a man to know all, no, not one part of women's qualities all the days of thy life.

Some with sweet words undermine their husbands, as Delilah did Samson, and some with chiding and brawling are made weary of the world, as Socrates and others. Socrates, when his wife³⁷ did chide and brawl, would go out of the house till all were quiet again, but because he would not scold with her again, it grieved her the more. For on a time, she watched his going out and threw a chamber pot out of the window on his head. "Ha, ha!" quoth he, "I thought after all this thunder there would come rain."

[Women commonly have either "a long tongue or a longing tooth," and woe to the man whose wife has both. A woman's sharp tongue is the bane of many a man's existence, and he is therefore justified in beating her: "As a sharp bit curbs a forward horse, even so a curst woman must be roughly used, but if women could hold their tongues, then many times men would their hands." Her tongue is a woman's chief weapon; despite all her protestations to the contrary, she can never keep a secret (which Swetnam demonstrates by several apocryphal stories from antiquity).

[Although marriage thus brings many dangers and disquiets, Swetnam does not advise all men against it. Instead, he counsels that the choice of a wife be made very carefully. He maintains that beauty and riches are disastrous without virtue, and the parents as well as the girl must be scrutinized. If a man makes a mistake in the purchase of a horse, he may sell it again, but once married, he must stand by his word even if he was deceived about his wife.]

' Now if thou ask me how thou shouldst choose thy wife, I answer that thou hast the whole world to make choice, and yet thou mayest be

37. Xanthippe, the wife of the Greek philosopher Socrates, was proverbial for her shrewish disposition.

deceived. An ancient Father, being asked by a young man how he should choose a wife, he answered him thus: "When thou seest a flock of maidens together, hoodwink" thyself fast and run amongst them. And look which thou chooseth; let her be thy wife." The young man told him that if he went blindfolded, he might be deceived. "And so thou mayest," quoth the old man, "if thy eyes were open, for in the choice of thy wife, thou must not trust thy own eyes. For they will deceive thee and be the cause of thy woe. For she may seem good whose waist is like a wand; or she which hath a spider-fingered hand; or she which on her tiptoes still doth stand, and never read but in a golden book, nor will not be caught but with a golden hook; or such a one as can stroke a beard, or look" a head, and of every flea make herself afraid. If thou hadst a spring,³⁸ such a wench would make him a beggar if he were half a King; then this is no bargain for thee." But hark a little further. The best time for a young man to marry is at the age of twenty and five, and then to take a wife of the age of seventeen years or thereabout, rather a maid than a widow, for a widow she is framed to the conditions of another man and can hardly be altered, so that thy pains will be double. For thou must unlearn a widow and make her forget and forgo her former corrupt and disordered behavior, the which is hardly to be done. But a young woman of tender years is flexible and bending, obedient, and subject to do anything according to the will and pleasure of her husband.

And if thy state be good, marry near home and at leisure, but if thy state be weak and poor, then to better thyself (after inquiry of her wealth and conditions) go far off and dispatch it quickly; for doubt lest tattling speeches which commonly in these cases runs betwixt party and party and breaks it off even then when it is come to the upshot. But as I have already said, before thou put thy foot out of doors, make diligent inquiry of her behavior, for by the market folk thou shalt hear how the market goeth. For by inquiry thou shalt hear whether she be wise, virtuous, and kind, wearing but her own proper hair and such garments as her friends' estate will afford; or whether she love to keep within the house and to the servants have a watchful eye; or if she have a care when to spend and when to spare, and be

38. Blindfold.

39. Examine, inspect. Such a woman would be exceptionally dainty, since combing fleas and lice out of hair was a common occupation.

40. A young man.

content with what God doth send; or if she can shed no kind of unstained tears but when just cause of hearty sorrow is; and that in wealth and woe, in sickness and in health, she will be all alike. Such a wife will make thee happy in thy choice.

Although some happen on a devilish and unhappy woman, yet all men do not so, and such as happen ill, it is a warning to make them wise if they make a second choice. Not that all other shall have the like fortune: the sun shineth upon the good and bad, and many a man happeneth sooner on a shrew than a ship. Some thrive by dicing, but not one in an hundredth; therefore dicing is ill husbandry. Some thrive by marriage, and yet many are undone by marriage, for marriage is either the making or marring of many a man. And yet I will not say but amongst dust there is a Pearl found, and in hard rocks, Diamonds of great value. And so amongst many women there are some good, as that gracious and glorious Queen of all womenkind, the Virgin Mary, the mother of all bliss. What won her honor but an humble mind and her pains and love unto our Savior, Christ?

Sarah is commended for the earnest love that she bore to her husband, not only for calling him Lord, but for many other qualities; also Susanna, for her chastity and for creeping on her knees to please her husband. But there are meaner Histories which makes mention of many others, as that of Demetrias, how that she was content to run Lackey by her husband's side.

Likewise, Lucretia, for the love and loyalty that she bore to her husband. Being unkindly abused by an unchaste lecher against her will, she presently slew herself in the presence of many rather than she would offer her body again to her husband, being but one time defiled.⁴¹

[Swetnam continues to relate stories of virtuous women. One woman took her husband's place in prison so that he might escape, while the wife of Mausolus built for her husband such a fabulous sepulcher that it became one of the seven wonders of the world. A loving wife in Rome committed suicide with her husband because he was dying of an incurable disease. It is recorded that Alexander the Great bitterly

⁴¹ Sarah, wife of the Hebrew patriarch Abraham, is a conventional type of the virtuous, subservient wife, but the Old Testament Apocrypha mention nothing about Susanna "creeping on her knees," although her chastity is extolled. Lucretia's story is told by the Roman historian Livy.

mourned the death of his wife.⁴² Adam was so fond of his wife that he disobeyed God's commandment in order to please her. Therefore, a man who happens upon a good wife is indeed fortunate, and he should not desire to change her in case he cannot find such another.)

Saint Paul saith those which marry do well, but he also saith those which marry not do better. But yet also he saith that it is better to marry than to burn in lust. A merry companion, being asked by his friend why he did not marry, he made this answer and said that he had been in Bedlam⁴³ two or three times and yet he was never so mad to marry. And yet there is no joy nor pleasure in the world which may be compared to marriage, so the parties are of near equal years and of good qualities. Then good fortune and bad is welcome to them; both their cares are equal and their joys equal. Come what will, all is welcome and all is common betwixt them. The husband doth honor and reverence her, and if he be rich, he committeth all his goods to her keeping. And if he be poor and in adversity, then he beareth but the one half of the grief, and furthermore she will comfort him with all the comfortable means she can devise. And if he will stay solitary in his house, she will keep him company. If he will walk into the fields, why she will go with him, and if he be absent from home, she sigheth often and wisheth his presence. Being come home, he findeth content sitting smiling in every corner of his house to give him a kind and hearty welcome home, and she receiveth him with the best and greatest joy that she can. Many are the joys and sweet pleasures in marriage, as in our children. Being young, they play, prattle, laugh, and sheweth us many pretty toys to move us to mirth and laughter; and when they are bigger grown and that age or poverty hath afflicted the Parents, then they show the duty of children in relieving their old, aged parents with what they can shift for. And when their parents are dead, they bring them to the earth from whence they came.

Yet now consider on the other side: when a wrinkled and toothless woman shall take a beardless boy (a short tale to make of it), there can be no liking nor loving between such contraries, but continual strife and debate. So likewise when matches are made by the Parents and the dowry told and paid before the young couple have any knowledge of it

42. Since both of Alexander's wives survived him, one would question Swetnam's sources for this report.

43. A famous lunatic asylum in London.

(and so many times are forced against their minds, fearing the rigor and displeasure of their parents), they often promise with their mouths that which they refuse with their hearts.

[If a man marries a woman for beauty without dowry, he will soon tire of her, while riches maintain their attractiveness. When marriages are arranged, it is the duty of the father to investigate the qualities of his prospective son-in-law. The husband, then, must "satisfy the honest desires of his wife," keep her in health, give her his loving company, secrets, and counsel, gently rebuke her faults, and always behave toward her with civility.]

[A wife must stay away from women of ill repute; she should behave in so sober and chaste a manner as never to encourage other men. She should always speak mildly to her husband and bear all his rebukes in silence. For his part, the husband ought never to beat his wife: "For with what face can a man embrace that body which his hands hath battered and bruised, or with what heart can a woman love that man who can find it in his heart to beat her?" The wife must be frugal and keep the house in good order, for "a light housewife who liveth without doing of anything" will ruin her husband's household and give bad example to the servants.]

But these men are to be laughed at who, having a wife and a sufficient wife to do all the work within doors which belongs for a woman to do, yet the husband will set hens abroad, season the pot, and dress the meat, or any the like work which belongeth not to the man. Such husbands many times offend their wives greatly, and they wrong themselves. For if they were employed abroad in matters belonging to men, they would be the more desirous, being come home, to take their ease than to trouble their wives and servants in meddling with their matters. For the rule and government of the house belongeth to the wife.

And he that hath a wife of his own and goeth to another woman is like a rich thief which will steal when he hath no need.

Amongst all the creatures that God hath created, there is none more subject to misery than a woman, especially those that are fruitful to bear children, but they have scarce a month's rest in a whole year, but are continually overcome with pain, sorrow, and fear. As indeed the danger of childbearing must needs be a great terror to a woman, which are counted but weak vessels in respect of men, and yet it is supposed that there is no disease that a man endureth that is one half so grievous or painful as childbearing is to a woman. Let it be the toothache, gout,

or colic: nay, if a man had all these at once, yet nothing comparable to a woman's pain in her travail with child.

[Swetnam concludes the chapter by referring the reader to Ovid's poem on the cures for love (*Remedia Amoris*).⁴⁴ Men who wish to avoid lust should abstain from excessive meat and drink; they should keep busy at all times and stay away from places of temptation. The lover should never even mention the name of his beloved, but he should contrive to love two or three simultaneously, or at least to spend his passion on other women. This Ovid said because he did not have the benefit of God's grace to prescribe more moral remedies for love.]

THE BEARBAITING OR THE VANITY OF WIDOWS, CHOOSE YOU WHETHER.

Woe be unto that unfortunate man that matcheth himself with a widow, for a widow will be the cause of a thousand woes. Yet there are many that do wish themselves no worse matched than to a rich widow. But thou dost not know what griefs thou joinest with thy gains, for if she be rich, she will look to govern, and if she be poor, then art thou plagued both with beggary and bondage. Again, thy pains will be double in regard of him which marieth with a maid. For thou must unlearn thy widow and make her forget her former corrupt and disorderd behavior; the which if thou take upon thee to do, thou hadst even as good undertake to wash a Blackamoor⁴⁵ white. For commonly widows are so froward, so waspish, and so stubborn that thou canst not wrest them from their wills. And if thou think to make her good by stripes, thou must beat her to death. One, having married with a froward widow, she called him these and many other unhappy names. So he took her and cut the tongue out of her head, but she ever afterwards would make the sign of the gallows with her fingers to him.

It is seldom or never seen that a man marieth with a widow for her beauty nor for her personage, but only for her wealth and riches. And if she be rich and beautiful withal, then thou matchest thyself to a she-devil, for she will go like a Peacock and thou, like a Woodcock. For she

44. The *Remedies for Love* is a witty, tongue-in-cheek poem allegedly written because Ovid's poetic treatment of the art of seduction (*Ars Amatoria*) had been so successful that lovers were clamoring for advice on how to break up love affairs.

45. A negro.

will hide her money to maintain her pride, and if thou at any time art desirous to be merry in her company, she will say thou art merry because thou hast gotten a wife that is able to maintain thee, where before thou wast a beggar and hadst nothing. And if thou show thyself sad, she will say thou art sad because thou canst not bury her, thereby to enjoy that which she hath. If thou make provision to fare well in thy house, she will bid thee spend that which thou broughtest thyself.

If thou show thyself sparing, she will say thou shalt not pinch her of that which is her own, and if thou do anything contrary to her mind, she will say her other husband was more kind. If thou chance to dine from home, she will bid thee go sup with thy Harlots abroad; if thou go abroad and spend anything before thou comest home, she will say, "A beggar I found thee, and a beggar thou meanest to leave me." If thou stay always at home, she will say thou art happy that hast gotten a wife that is able to maintain thee idle. If thou carve her the best morsel on the table, though she take it, yet she will take it scornfully and say she had a husband that would let her cut where she liked herself.

And if thou come in well disposed, thinking to be merry and entertaining her with fair words, she will call thee dissembling hypocrite, saying, "Thou speakest me fair with thy tongue, but thy heart is on thy minions⁴⁶ abroad." Lo, these are the frantic tricks of froward widows. They are neither well full nor fasting; they will neither go to Church nor stay at home (I mean in regard of their impatient minds). For a man shall neither be quiet in her sight nor out of her sight. For if thou be in her sight, she will vex thee as beforesaid, and out of her sight, thy own conscience will torment and trouble thy mind to think on the purgatory which perforce thou must endure when thou comest home.

She will make Clubs trump when thou hast never a black card in thy hand, for with her cruel tongue she will ring thee such a peal that one would think the devil were come from Hell. Besides this, thou shalt have a branded slut like a hell-hag with a pair of paps⁴⁷ like a pair of dung pots shall bring in thy dinner, for thy widow will not trust thee with a wench that is handsome in thy house. Now if that upon just occasion thou throwest the platters at the maid's head, seeing thy meat brought in by such a slut and so sluttishly dressed, then will thy widow

46. Darlings, mistresses.

47. Teats, breasts.

take pepper in the nose and stamp and stare, and look so sour as if she had come but even then from eating of Crabs, saying, "If thou hadst not married with me, thou wouldst have been glad of the worst morsel that is here." [Sweetnam continues by describing the quarrel in detail; he then proceeds to tell several stories about men who married widows. One, on his deathbed, stated that he did not care whether he went to Heaven or Hell, as long as his wife was not there. Another, hearing a preacher say, "Take up thy cross and follow me," slung his wife upon his back and walked up to the minister. Another, amidst a great storm at sea, cast his wife overboard when the captain called for the heaviest goods to be thrown off the ship.]

Thou mayest think that I have spoken enough concerning Widows, but the further I run after them, the further I am from them. For they are the sum of the seven deadly sins, the Fiends of Satan, and the gates of Hell. Now methinketh I hear some say unto me that I should have told them this lesson sooner, for too late cometh medicine when the patient is dead. Even so, too late cometh counsel when it is past remedy, but it is better late than never, for it may be a warning to make others wise.

But why do I make so long a harvest of so little corn? Seeing the corn is bad, my harvest shall cease, for so long as women do ill, they must not think to be well spoken of. If you would be well reported of or kept like the Rose when it hath lost the color, then you should smell sweet in the bud as the Rose doth, or if you would be tasted for old wine, you should be sweet at the first like a pleasant Grape. Then should you be cherished for your courtesy and comforted for your honesty; so should you be preserved like the sweet Rose and esteemed of as pleasant wine. But to what purpose do I go about to instruct you, knowing that such as counsel the devil can never amend him of his evil?

And so, praying those which have already made their choice and seen the troubles and felt the torments that is with women to take it merrily and to esteem of this book only as the toys of an idle head. Nor I would not have women murmur against me for that I have not written more bitterly against men, for it is a very hard winter when one Wolf eateth another; and it is also an ill bird that defileth her own nest; and a most unkind part it were for one man to speak ill of another.