

Rev. Tipping Silvester, "Venus's Girdle; or Advice to a Wife"

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[REV. TIPPING SILVESTER]

“Venus’s Girdle; or Advice to a Wife”

--LET nothing your unsully’d beauties cloud;
Be always chearful, but be never loud.
Ev’n *Juno*’s self set deities at odds,
And oft made uproars in the blest abodes:
For, if we may believe what poets sung, 5
Imperial *Jove* was pester’d with a tongue.
Where pets prevail, sweet concord’s broken soon;
The string, which jars, is always out of tune.
LET no *distrusts* your settled peace disturb;
Which irritate the mind, but seldom cure: 10
So the cold humour, which on lime we pour,
Inflames those parts, which quiet were before
Reproaches seldom cure our loose desires,
But leave a stink, and raise domestick fires.
MAY no *surmises* lie conceal’d below; 15
A rankling breast create a sullen brow:
The sulphur rages most in caverns pent,
And shocks that earth, which cannot give it vent.
JUST wit to furnish the politer Joke;
A *spirit*, just enough not to provoke: 20
Genteel *demeanour*, and superior *sense*,
And *ease* at just remove from *indolence*:
Oeconomy, which nought superfluous spends;
And is least frugal, when we have our friends:
These be your aim: the *something* further still, 25
Which hits the good mens humours, when they’re ill;
There goes to feed a hymeneal flame,
Th’ engaging *somewhat*, which still wants a name:
The wiser wife alone this Secret knows;
This is the *girdle* beauty’s queen bestows. 30

NOTES:

Title This is an extract from Silvester's poem of the same title which first appeared in his volume, *Original Poems and Translations* (London, 1733), pp. 55-56.

3 Juno Roman goddess and "female counterpart to Jupiter; [she] was connected with all aspects of the life of women, most particularly married life" (*Britannica*).

6 Jove Poetic form of Jupiter, the Roman name for Zeus.

11 cold humour Likely a reference to phlegm, one of the four humours associated with cold and moisture; *lime* "The alkaline earth which is the chief constituent of mortar...it is powerfully caustic and combines readily with water, evolving great heat in the process" (*OED*).

21 Genteel "Courteous, polite; obliging" (*OED*).

23 Oeconomy Archaic spelling of "economy."

27 hymeneal "Pertaining to marriage" (*OED*).

SOURCE: *The Gentleman's Magazine*, (February 1734), p. 99. [Google Books]

Edited by Liv Wisely