

This is the question

Mary

Children — (if it Please God) — Constant companion, (& friend in old age) who will feel interested in one, — object to be beloved & played with. — — better than a dog anyhow. — Home, & someone to take care of house — Charms of music & female chit-chat. — These things good for one's health. — ~~Forced to visit & receive relations~~ *but terrible loss of time.* —

W My God, it is intolerable to think of spending ones whole life, like a neuter bee, working, working, & nothing after all. — No, no won't do. — Imagine living all one's day solitarily in smoky dirty London House. — Only picture to yourself a nice soft wife on a sofa with good fire, & books & music perhaps — Compare this vision with the dingy reality of Grt. Marlbro' St.

Marry — Marry — Marry Q.E.D.

Not Mary

No children, (no second life), no one to care for one in old age.— What is the use of working 'in' without sympathy from near & dear friends—who are near & dear friends to the old, except relatives

Freedom to go where one liked — choice of Society & *little of it.* — Conversation of clever men at clubs — Not forced to visit relatives, & to bend in every trifle. — to have the expense & anxiety of children — perhaps quarelling — **Loss of time.** — cannot read in the Evenings — fatness & idleness — Anxiety & responsibility — less money for books &c — if many children forced to gain one's bread. — (But then it is very bad for ones health to work too much)

Perhaps my wife wont like London; then the sentence is banishment & degradation into indolent, idle fool —

¹ These notes record Darwin's speculations about the prospect of marriage and his future life and work. They were written before his engagement and marriage to his cousin Emma Wedgwood in January 1839. The note has been conjecturally dated to July 1838. Darwin's notes on marriage are transcribed and annotated in *Correspondence* vol. 2, appendix iv.

[2]

It being proved necessary to Marry
When? Soon or Late

The Governor says soon for otherwise bad if one has children — one's character is more flexible — one's feelings more lively & if one does not marry soon, one misses so much good pure happiness. —
But then if I married tomorrow: there would be an infinity of trouble & expense in getting & furnishing a house, — fighting about no Society — morning calls — awkwardness — loss of time every day. (without one's wife was an angel, & made one keep industrious). — Then how should I manage all my business if I were obliged to go every day walking with ~~one's~~ my wife. — Eheu!! I never should know French, — or see the Continent — or go to America, or go up in a Balloon, or take solitary trip in Wales — poor slave. — you will be worse than a negro — And then horrid poverty, (without one's wife was better than an angel & had money) — Never mind my boy — Cheer up — One cannot live this solitary life, with groggy old age, friendless & cold, & childless staring one in ones face, already beginning to wrinkle. — Never mind, trust to chance — keep a sharp look out — There is many a happy slave —