Hymen's hazard, or The jilting of Susannah Trifle: A critical edition of St George Tucker's essay #27 "For the Old Batchellor"

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HYMEN'S HAZARD, OR THE JILTING OF SUSANNAH TRIPLE

A Critical Edition of St. George Tucker's
Essay #27 "For the old Batchelor"

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of English
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Alexander Spottswood Clark
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APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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Approved, July 1981

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to familiarize the reader with St. George Tucker and one of his essays "For the old Batchellor." There is provided a biographical sketch of the author, an annotated text of the twenty-seventh number of the group, and a critique. The analysis places Tucker's work in the essay tradition, and notes possible sources and analogues in The Spectator and other periodicals. It evaluates the literary merits of the piece through its word-play, plot, and characterization. The historical relevance of the subject matter is discussed in especial regard to wealth and gambling, women and marriage. There follows a comparative discussion of Tucker's and his editor William Wirt's Old Bachelor writings, and in particular of their respective views about women. The study ends by proposing an autobiographical reading of "The Jilting."
HYMEN'S HAZARD, OR THE JILTING OF SUSANNAH TRIPLE

A Critical Edition of St. George Tucker's

Essay #27 "For the old Batchelor"
INTRODUCTION

In March of 1811, St. George Tucker renounced all public undertakings and retired to the old state capital of Virginia, Williamsburg. His resolution did not last, and just thirty-two months elapsed before he accepted a post as Federal Judge of the District of Virginia, in November 1813. He filled the interval with activities which he had had scant time for while first a merchant, then a soldier, next a lawyer, at once a circuit judge and the second professor of law at The College of William and Mary, and lately a judge on the Virginia Court of Appeals. St. George used his new-found freedom to explore the mountainous areas around Staunton and Lexington to study unusual phenomena such as the Natural Bridge, which had excited his curiosity. He fully enjoyed the family life from which he had necessarily absented himself so often in the past, but he also continued to cultivate the art of writing, one which he had pursued since his youth.

The canon of Tucker's works was already impressive, including literary, economic, and political efforts. Throughout Virginia he was an acknowledged poet and critic of merit, to whom personages such as Col. and Mrs. Byrd, Theodorick Bland, and later William Munford and William Wirt turned for advice on their verses. Several of his poems were published in newspapers and periodicals, especially The American Museum Magazine, with whose editor, Mathew Carey, Tucker
corresponded regularly. He completed two (eventually three) topical plays as thinly veiled vehicles for his Jeffersonian politics, none of which was produced. He authored an influential article on the regulation of trade with Great Britain, a pamphlet that presents a plan for the abolition of slavery in Virginia, and a colossal annotation of Blackstone's Commentaries. During August and September 1811, St. George Tucker tried his hand at the familiar essay, producing some twenty-eight examples. A few more details concerning the life of the man whose experiences went into these works are in order before an examination of the essays may most profitably be made.

St. George Tucker (1752-1827) was the last of six children born to Henry Tucker (1713-1787) and Anne Butterfield, daughter of General Nathaniel and Frances (White) Butterfield. St. George's father was known as Col. Henry Tucker of "The Grove" to differentiate him from his father, also Henry Tucker of Port Royal, Bermuda, by a rank he probably attained in the militia and by the name of his country estate. Col. Tucker was aristocratic by nature. He instilled in his offspring a respect for family ties as well as a desire for the best company. By 1750, his mercantile business, if not abundantly lucrative, had placed his family in the forefront of Bermudian society.

St. George received his primary education from his brothers and sisters and from a private school in the capital, St. Georges, on the opposite end of the island from "The Grove." The school was run by the Rev. Alexander Richardson, who had also imparted a standard classical education to the young Tucker's three brothers. Their father did not believe that his two daughters needed to leave home to acquire
the necessary skills for their strictly domestic future lives. By the time St. George had graduated, it was more than his father could afford to send him to the Inns of Court in London to receive training in his chosen field of law. Col. Tucker started the boy reading law under Mr. John Slater, the island's Attorney-General and St. George's uncle, with the intention that he should continue his studies at the Inns when it was practical. The prospect of a London education faded when the colonel received a glowing report of the excellent instruction at reasonable fees that were obtained at The College of William and Mary in Virginia from a Mr. Stark, probably Bolling Stark, a native of that state. When the news came to St. George in 1770, he consoled himself over the substitution of Williamsburg for London as the place for his immediate professional training with the knowledge that he would at least be leaving the very disagreeable situation under his choleric uncle. After a year of impatient study, the collegian-to-be embarked on October 11, 1771, for a voyage whose progress would include two-week-stops in New York, Philadelphia, and Yorktown, where St. George's outgoing nature would win friends and impress relatives. He arrived at Williamsburg in January 1772.

Williamsburg, then capital of Virginia, held much in store for the young man of twenty. For the first year he enrolled in the secondary school under the Rev. Thomas Gwatkin, professor and private chaplain to the Governor's wife, Lady Dunmore. Tucker's studies included natural and moral philosophy. The former consisted of physics, metaphysics, and mathematics, while the latter involved rhetoric, logic, and ethics. Ethics comprised both natural and civil
law. He fell into the company of James Innes, the head usher at
the College. Innes and his five cohorts made up the F. H. C., then
jokingly called the "Flat Hat Club," though today the true meaning of
the initials has been lost. The group had been organized in the
1750's and continued to be active until the Revolution. Little is
known about the secret society, but when Thomas Jefferson belonged to
it in the 1760's it seems to have been an organization with no par-
ticular purpose. By the 1770's the fraternity undertook amateur
charitable and scientific endeavors. Tucker's F. H. C. had its
share of meetings in the Raleigh Tavern that ended in senseless
drunkenness, and its share of scrapes with school authorities. In
these respects the club seems to have remained constant from Jef-
ferson's time. The great number of scholarships and academic posts
held by the group's members, though, suggests their ability and casts
the F. H. C. as a forerunner of organizations such as William and
Mary's Phi Beta Kappa (1776).

Col. Tucker had found out that William and Mary was not so rea-
sonable in expense as Mr. Stark had indicated and did not see the
need for his son's wide range of studies. St. George was accordingly
instructed to withdraw from college and to place himself under Mr.
George Wythe, who would become the first law professor in America.
As Wythe's clerk, Tucker looked up cases and prepared legal papers
while he followed a rigorous reading list in his "spare" time. One
of the few breaks in the student's routine took the form of a trip
home for the autumn months of 1773. He passed lawyer Wythe's exam-
ination on April 2, 1774, and was licensed to practice in the county
or inferior courts two days later. On April 10, 1775, St. George was admitted to practice before the General Court and was licensed May 1 by Lord Dunmore, a month before the latter's flight from the colony. Due to the turbulent events America had experienced already, the courts had ceased to function regularly, and the fledgling lawyer was called home to help with the family shipping interests.

Bermuda was in a delicate position in 1775. The British colony faced subjection to an embargo by an increasingly militant America that would sever its means of survival. It was on this point that Col. Henry Tucker petitioned Congress in that year. Congress made its position clear that it would trade exemption from an embargo for arms or gunpowder. The response had been prompted most likely by the actions of St. George and his brother, Thomas Tudor Tucker. The former had told the president of Congress, Peyton Randolph, of the existence of an unguarded magazine in Bermuda's capital before he had left America in June. The latter had continually urged the committee of safety at Charleston to seize the same store. Col. Tucker abandoned his loyalty to Britain for the interests of Bermuda and agreed with Benjamin Franklin to trade the powder at St. Georges for supplies. On August 14, 1776, the crews of two American ships, aided by Tucker relatives Henry of Somerset and James of Paget, raided and brought off 1800 pounds of powder. St. George had doubtless been told of the operation, for he had arranged for an alibi to walk on the parade with the island's Chief Justice that evening until nearly midnight.

In November 1776, St. George decided to return to America. He
took a sloop owned in part by his family and sold salt from Turk's Island to the new government in Virginia for a good price. From his friend Lt. Governor John Page he received a commission to trade indigo from South Carolina for arms from the West Indies. After a few trips his financial future was secure. Tucker met his future wife at a service in Bruton Parish Church celebrating Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga. She was Mrs. Frances Bland Randolph, widow of John Randolph of Matoax, youngest daughter of Theodorick and Frances Bolling Bland, aged twenty-five years. They were married in September of 1778, and St. George had committed into his care three stepsons, Richard, Theodorick, and John, as well as their estates Matoax, Bizarre, and Roanoake, which were mortgaged as a result of debts incurred by the father's brother.

The Tuckers settled at Matoax, but the conflict with Britain forced St. George to alternate as a soldier and as a family man. While he was the former, Mrs. Tucker could rely for general domestic help on Maria Rind, the orphan of a Williamsburg printer, whom she had adopted through the interest of one Mrs. Sarah Norton. Tucker's first call to arms came in May 1779 when he joined a company of militia to oppose a force under Sir George Collier. St. George was back within a month, and Anne Frances Bland was born on September 26. A force under the traitor Benedict Arnold landed at Westover on January 4, 1781, and burned Richmond. St. George removed his household to Bizarre, seventy-five miles up the Appomattox from Matoax, despite the fact that his wife had just given birth to Henry St. George on December 29. The limited scope of the enemy's actions
permitted a return to Bizarre one month later. When Tucker reenlisted he was made a major in his friend Col. Beverly Randolph's regiment under General Robert Lawson. He received a bayonet wound in the leg at the battle of Guilford Courthouse, but he rejoined his family at Bizarre in good health on April 5. The furlough did not last, for General Lawson appointed him lieutenant colonel in May. In response to an alarm of exaggerated proportion, Tucker caused his family to move forty miles further distant to Roanoake in June. His authorization of a return to Bizarre later that month was futile, for within a week another incursion caused the family to flee to Dungeness, a Randolph estate in Goochland county. St. George joined them there and guided another migration back to Bizarre. Tucker participated in the siege of Yorktown, and his letters and journal written while he was French interpreter to Governor Nelson provide one of the most complete accounts of the operation extant.

With the cessation of hostilities, the Tuckers resumed the business of raising their family. On September 18, 1782, Theodorick Thomas Tudor came into the world. They had returned to Matoax, and St. George enrolled his stepsons in a Williamsburg school run by a former classmate, Walter Maury. Lawyer Tucker opened his practice in the county courts, moved up to the General Court and Court of Chancery after a year, and was so successful that by 1785 he employed other attorneys to handle some of his caseload. July of that year saw the publication of Tucker's answer to the British restrictions of trade between the West Indies and the United States. This article was the principal reason he attended the Annapolis Convention of
1786, which is remembered for first proposing a Federal Constitution.

The family had for a great while entertained the idea of visiting Bermuda. The trip had been postponed once, just before Nathaniel Beverly was born on September 6, 1781, but the plans matured the following August. Three months of family celebration culminated with Col. Henry Tucker's seventy-second birthday. The return trip was agony for Mrs. Tucker, and on March 12, 1786, she was delivered of a daughter that did not survive birth. St. George took his wife with him on what he hoped would be a health restoring trip for her to New York, a journey he had promised a Bermudian relation he would make to investigate some claims. The claims proved unfounded, but the couple enjoyed a month of vacation. After St. George's return from the Annapolis Convention, the Randolph boys were enrolled at Princeton. Mrs. Tucker had already engaged John Coalter, the son of Scottish farmer immigrants, to tutor the younger children. Her health declined drastically with another pregnancy, and though a daughter, Elizabeth, was born to her on December 16, 1787, Frances died one month later.

In his grief St. George had at first declined his election to the General Court, but with John Coalter and Maria Rind to care for the children he finally accepted. He was concerned that his children would have to travel to school, so he moved to Williamsburg where they could be enrolled. He had a house rebuilt on the northeast corner of Nicholson Street and Palace Green. Early in 1790, Tucker was elected to the College faculty to replace George Wythe, who, as
sole judge of the Court of Chancery, was required to live in Rich-
mond. John Coalter had been reading law under Tucker, and he de-
cided to establish a law practice in Staunton to prepare for mar-
riage to Maria Rind, whom he had quietly courted. St. George had
also gained the hand of a woman, Mrs. Lelia Carter, the eldest daugh-
ter of Sir Peyton Skipwith and Anne Miller, born February 9, 1767.
St. George had his house enlarged to accommodate two new stepchildren,
Charles and Mary Walker, "Polly," Carter. The Tuckers' wedding on
October 8, 1791 preceded the Coalters' there by less than a month.
The children who had been under John's and Maria's care were either
put under private tutelage or enrolled in the grammar school at Wil-
liam and Mary.

Though the marriages were happy events in themselves, they
ushered in a period of almost uninterrupted ill fortune. Maria
Coalter died in childbirth on October 21, 1792. There was friction
among the children and especially among the servants of the newly
joined Tucker and Carter families. Though the new Mrs. Tucker gave
birth to a son, St. George, who was nicknamed "Tutee," she lost an-
other child at birth in December 1793. Feelings were at their
worst when a sustained period of illness took Tudor on April 3, Tutee
on September 26, 1795, and Elizabeth at the end of July 1796.
During this period, Tucker's three stepsons from his first marriage
were cared for by his brother, Dr. Thomas Tudor Tucker. Theodorick
died in 1792. Richard married his young cousin, Judith Randolph,
and produced two children before dying a subject of scandal in 1796.
Only John Randolph survived to become a distinguished member of
Congress, residing at Bizarre with his brother Richard's unfortunate family. Even St. George's pamphlet, which advocated a plan for the gradual abolition of slavery in Virginia, was rejected by the General Assembly.

After these sad incidents, the household settled into relative peace and prosperity. Judge Tucker possessed a truly inventive genius. He constructed pipes to fill a large copper tub in the bath house from the laundry, where the servants could heat the water. An "earth closet" adjoining Tucker's bedroom allowed sanitation to be dealt with from outside. He also designed a system of signal flashes with which he could communicate over the length of Williamsburg.

In 1804, Tucker resigned from the College faculty to take a seat on the Virginia Court of Appeals. The same year saw the publication of St. George's annotated edition of Blackstone's Commentaries. Contained in its appendices are the first legal commentaries on the Constitution ever to appear. At about this time St. George's remaining children began to determine their futures. Frances married Joseph Cabell, a lawyer of reputation, wealth, and good family. Their estate at Warminster proved so congenial that the Tuckers visited them often to escape the summer mosquitoes. Perhaps the construction of a small house on the Cabell estate for the judge and his wife helped to convince St. George to quit the Court of Appeals and to rest as long as he did before taking the Federal bench, which he held until shortly before his death.

Whether the Cabells' kindness or personal discontent, as evidenced by a rejection of all public duties, spurred him, St. George
did "retire." A few months previous to his resignation there had begun to appear in the Richmond *Enquirer* a series of *Spectator*-like essays, entitled "The Old Bachelor," which could not have escaped his attention. Tucker knew the creator of the series, William Wirt, as a friend and fellow lawyer living in Williamsburg. He may have been one of those asked by Wirt to contribute to the sequence, which ran off and on from December 22, 1810, to December 24, 1811. His judicial duties, which were certainly demanding, may have prevented his responding at once. Whether solicited or not, St. George produced some twenty-eight essays in the fall of 1811, each headed "For the old Batchelor." The literary outpouring was in vain, for while there exists plentiful epistolary evidence that St. George submitted work to Wirt, there is only slim evidence that one of his pieces was published. Breaks in the series of extant manuscripts, numbered from one to twenty-eight, create uncertainty as to how many St. George wrote. While it is safe to assume that there were twenty-eight at one time, there may have been more which are now lost. Twenty-two manuscripts, two of which are revisions, repose, virtually unknown, in The Tucker-Coleman Collection of Swem Library at The College of William and Mary in Virginia.

One essay of this group, the twenty-seventh in St. George's scheme, is part of the above-mentioned slim evidence, and helps to create a circumstantial case for his being the author of one of Wirt's published numbers, also the twenty-seventh. The printed piece is partially composed of a letter signed with the metaphoric name Suzannah Thankful. St. George's essay is also made up of a fictitious let-
ter, signed by a thematically appropriate Susannah Trifle. In the Trifle letter a naive, somewhat rustic, young woman relates her cousin's unorthodox proposal of marriage and subsequent loss of interest, then asks for advice. St. George responds in the persona of Dr. Cecil, the pseudonym of William Wirt and the old bachelor of the series, with a stock description of an industrious husband, and goes on to warn people like Miss Trifle's cousin about the danger of their conduct. To this end he cites the life of an executed convict from an Annual Register, and finishes the piece with an appropriate Latin quotation. Whether St. George wrote the Suzannah Thankful letter is a question whose answer lies beyond the scope of this work. I present my annotated edition of the unpublished essay number twenty-seven to increase the store of knowledge about St. George Tucker's work "For the old Batchellor," and to help scholars in the future to resolve questions such as that posed by the Suzannah Thankful-Suzannah Trifle similarity. Since Tucker did not name the piece himself, a suitable title might be "Hymen's Hazard, or the Jilting of Susannah Trifle."

CONCERNING THE TEXT

The essay headed "27. For the old Batchellor." is written closely, in ink, recto and verso on one of thirty-eight stitched foolscap folios which have been trimmed of frayed edges (32.29 cm. x 19.05 cm.). The arabic numeral "27" seems to designate the number of composition of the essay in the series, though there is no clear
explanation for the letter E which concludes the manuscript.
For the old Batchellor.

Dear Doctor Cecil,

Every body in our neighbourhood speaks so highly of you, that I have been a good while resolved to ask your advice, of which I am sure you will think I stand very much in need. I am now nineteen years old, and have been more than eighteen months engaged to my Cousin Tom Trifle, to be married; but though we have been so long engaged, he has never once ask'd me to fix the time for our wedding; and he behaves so, at times, that I think he must have forgot our Engagement. You must know that when he returnd from College last Spring-twelvemonth, just about the time of the races, in our part of the Country, I was on a visit at my uncles, with my Mother who is a Widow. Our Races were to be the next day; so as we were taking a little walk in the Evening, Cousin Sukey, says he, I hope you never intend to change your name. --Lord, Cousin Tom, said I, I never thought of such a thing. That's right, says he, giving me a Locket in the shape of a heart, with some of his hair in it, keep this for my sake, and then you'll have no Occasion to change your name. So I took the Locket, & have ever since worn it in my Bosom, in token of our engagement. Well, that night he ask'd me to play at Loo with him. I had the Queen of Hearts in my hand, and when I lead it, he took it with his King. Ha! Cousin Sukey,
Says he, now I have got you snug, & you are mine forever.

Next day he drove me out to the Race field in a Gig, and as we were going along, Cousin Sukey, says he, when we are married, I intend to send to Philadelphia for a Coach that shall cost fifteen hundred dollars; how would you like that? Lord, Cousin Tom, said I, I should think that one that would cost a thousand would do. No, said he, Mr. Stockwell's [sic] cost twelve hundred; Col: Wheat-field's cost as much, and Lawyer Gabble's above a thousand, and I am determined that you shall ride in a finer than any of them. --Now, dear Doctor, could there be a firmer engagement under the sun?

--Well, as I was saying, we went to the races together, and in the Evening there was a Ball, and we danced together the whole Evening; I never was happier in my life, for Cousin Tom is the handsomest young man that I know, and dances as if he could jump over the moon, if he chose it. My uncle died about six weeks afterward & left him his whole Fortune, which is very large. Now, thinks I, the first thing Cousin Tom will do, will be to write to Philadelphia for our Coach, and I reckon we shall be be [sic] married sometime in September, or October. Would you believe it, Doctor, from that time to this, he has never said one word about the Coach, nor about our being married? I never see him, but what I try to remind him of it, as well as I can, without saying any thing directly about it, for I never see a Carriage without praising it, if it is tolerably handsome, and I never hear of a wedding that I do not enquire of him if he is invited to it, and whether he means to go or not. But it all would not do. His whole time is taken up with going to the Races, or to Washington
to hear the debates in Congress, or to the springs, or to the Assembly; for though he was not a Member last year, he was there great part of the Session, and this year was elected a Member; and ever since the October races have been over he has talk'd of little else, but Richmond, and the next Assembly. As soon as my Uncle died, he purchased a new Gig and Tandem from young Will Butterfly, who had just returnd in it from Philadelphia, and gave him three hundred dollars more than it cost; he travels in it always with two horses Tandem, and has a servant on horse back, and a led horse besides, that he may ride whenever he is tired of the Gig; I heard he lost above a thousand dollars at the races, last spring, besides a much larger sum at the Pharaoh-bank; and one still larger at the Loo-table with Capt: Kite, Major Hawk, and Dick Vulture. But his fortune is so large, that he need not mind such a trifling sum as the whole comes to, though to be sure it would have paid for the coach double, and a set of elegant horses into the Bargain. As he has never said a word to my Mother about our engagement, and very seldom comes to our house now, and when he does, as I told you before, says nothing about the Coach, or our being married, I am greatly at a loss how to behave; and my embarasment [sic] is much greater since I have got acquainted with Mr. Butterfly, who never sees me that he does not pay me some very handsome compliments, and particular Attentions. He once went so far as to ask me if my Affections were engaged: before I could determine what answer to give him Mama came into the room, and he rose and took his leave: and though I have seen him once or twice since, he has never repeated the Question. Now, Doctor, what
do you think of all this? Am I to consider myself as still under an engagement to Cousin Tom, or has his neglect released me from it; and may I believe that Mr. Butterfly will repeat his Question, or, that like my Cousin Tom, he will go no further? Your candid opinion upon these Questions is of great importance to me, & will infinitely oblige me. I am, Sir,

Yours most respectfully

Susannah Trifle

My fair Correspondent really appears to be in a delicate predicament; but I have no hesitation in advising her to renounce her resolution never to change her name. But at the same time I would not recommend to her to form an Alliance hastily with her new Admirer. The Family of the Butterflies are remarkable for their Inconstancy, and like her Cousin Tom, always on the wing; should she be fortunate enough to engage the affections of an honest, industrious young Man, who understands driving the plough, as well as her Cousin can drive his Gig and tandem, and who will never approach nearer to a Coach and six, than a good stout Waggon and Team, my advice to her is to give him her hand, at once, and send back the Locket, with its precious contents to her Cousin Tom, and never more think of riding in a Philadelphia built Coach.

It is mortifying to observe how many frivolous characters there are in our Country, whose lives are spent in a similar Course of Levity, as that which is described in the preceding Letter. But what is at first Levity, very soon proceeds to dissipation, and ends in absolute debauchery; and is not unfrequently attended with a
total loss of Fortune, Health, and Reputation. I might mention some Instances which have happened among our own Countrymen, to prove the Justice of what I here advance. But I prefer copying from an English annual Register, the following affecting article.

"March 4th: 1784. This morning were executed in the old Bailey, opposite Newgate, pursuant to their Sentence the six following Convicts. vis: John Lee for forging a Bill of Exchange for £15. (and five others.) Mr. Lee, one of the unhappy convicts, was born and educated a Gentleman; he possessed a strong understanding, and polished manners. When very young he entered the Army as an Ensign, and by force of merit, & address he obtained a Company. His Companions were of the first rank, which led him into expense, and obliged him to sell his Commission. He then attach'd himself to Miss I________ the Actress, and went upon the Stage, where, notwithstanding his Accomplishments he made but an indifferent figure. While they were as a part of the Edinburgh Company, playing at the Theatre of Aberdeen, they were encouraged to open an Academy for teaching the English Language. Mrs. Lee was much patronised, and had the daughters of the principal gentry in the Country at her House. Captain Lee was too fond of gambling, long to preserve his character in a place, where, though they are less rigid than other parts of Scotland, they yet pay Attention to the morals of those who are invested with public duties; and on the death of Mrs. Lee he was again suffered, without regret, to go abroad in the world. He renewed his Acquaintance with the Stage, and played at Portsmouth, and other Theatres. A few days previous to the Commission of the Crime
for which he suffered, he arrived in London without a Farthing, and being literally [sic] starving, and ashamed to beg, urged by the Calls of nature, he went to the Rose-tavern, in Bridges-street, where he had often spent large sums, and having dined, borrowed from the proprietor of the House a Guinea and a half, giving him as security a paper purporting to be Lord Townsend's draft on the ordnance office; the draft being offered for payment was stopped, and Mr. Lee being soon apprehended was tried and convicted &c. His friends did every thing that Friendship could dictate, to save his Life, but in vain."

Such is the melancholy, and apparently, authentic, detail of this unfortunate Gentleman's progress through life, and sad conclusion. Humanity shudders at the perusal. It shudders, because it observes hundreds pursuing the same unhappy Course, who, though they may escape the disgrace of public infamy, are, yet, doomed to suffer all that poverty, neglect, disease, and remorse, can inflict upon mind, as well as body. I could, were I so disposed, name at least four persons, natives of Virginia, whose Fate I have read of in Public Gazettes, who begun [sic] the world, and ended their Existence in it, precisely in the same Manner, as the unfortunate Captain Lee. In setting before my youthful Countrymen such a melancholy picture, I obey the dictates of humanity, and the injunctions of My own Bosom. Nemo Repente fuit turpissimus, is an Adage which every young Man who is about to enter upon a dissipated course of Life, should remember and Ponder upon. And he who does so, will check himself in his first outset, and retrace, as speedily as possible, his former steps,
towards utter ruin, and Destruction.

E.
The American Museum for January 1789 presents a short article on
the familiar essay which accurately describes the piece reproduced
above. A model essay should be useful and pleasing. These traits
are almost identical to the declared intentions "virtuously to in­
struct, or innocently to amuse;" of William Wirt's Old Bachelor
series, for which St. George Tucker was ostensibly writing. An
essay should display sound reasoning, and be both worldly and learn­
ed. Tucker's work safely advises women to wait for an industrious
husband, and men to shun dissipation. His fictive letter humorously
renders the serious subject of debauchery, strikingly complements the
tragical chronicle, and thus demonstrates the author's sophistica­
tion. He employs an unusual Annual Register extract and a thoughtful
Latin quotation which indicates a balanced bookishness. Tucker
treats the common topic of the morality of manners in his exemplary
cases of levity and self-indulgence. A typical writer of the famil­
lar essay casts himself as a friend to mankind, who will deliver a
necessary censure. Thus St. George rests squarely in the mainstream
of the genre when he presents his "melancholy picture," as a reproof
to some and a warning to others, in obedience of "the dictates of
humanity." There is a desirable abundance of whimsical and refined
imagination manifested in the lifestyle of Miss Trifle and the other
characters. Indeed, all these elements taken together with the
collection of domestic details—spring and fall races and dances, college, parlor games, a marriage coach, and springs resorts—constitute "the playfully satiric portrayal of manners, the seriously moral or didactic . . . the half-sentimental commentaries on American antiquity and traditions" which Richard Beale Davis says are elemental to the specifically Virginian essay. Tucker is working within a well-known and vigorous tradition.

Both the American Museum essay and Tucker's own introduction to another of his works, "The Dreamer," use Addison and Steele's Spectator as a standard for the genre. "The Jilting" closely resembles one number of that sequence. In Spectator Number 140, the first letter comes from one Lydia Novell, who despairs at the time she has already lost before writing, and requests that Mr. Spectator judge whether a pretender really loves her. She describes her "lukewarm" lover and complains that she "must not go faster than he does." He is rich and Lydia doubts whether he really loves her at all. The same elements are present in Tucker's essay. The reader knows that Susannah Trifle has contradicted common sense by waiting eighteen months before writing to Dr. Cecil about her neglectful cousin. She recounts his actions, says that she hints at their betrothal "without saying anything directly about it," and reveals that Tom's attentions had ceased upon his inheritance of a large fortune. There are differences between the letters, but the correspondences, when viewed in light of the fact that Tucker owned at least Spectator Volumes VII and VIII (and probably the rest, including Volume II, which contains the Lydia Novell letter), strongly
suggest that Spectator Number 140 is a source of Tucker's work.

Though the "advice column" format is unusual, The Spectator is not the only source of similarity to "The Jilting." The Columbian Almanac for 1794 contains an article for May which, after declaring how little the young seriously consider marriage, says, "Alas! what avail the graces of the finest figure, the most captivating address, the assemblage of all that is ensnaring, if the heart is depraved or the conduct imprudent." It is easy to see this statement borne out in Tom Trifle, who is the handsomest young man Susannah knows, who dances as if he could jump over the moon, who forces himself on his cousin, and who then commits breach of "promise" when a more attractive situation presents itself. In the same issue under July it is stated that "misery is indeed the necessary result of all deviation from virtue; but early debauchery, early disease, early profligacy of all kinds, are particularly fruitful of wretchedness." There is another pertinent article in the September 1789 issue of the American Museum, which Tucker owned (see note number 6 to the critique, above), concerning a male coquette, or flirt. The author's sister-in-law had been attended by a gentleman who, when after a suitably long time he was asked his intentions, broke all contact, sending the young lady into delirium and scandal. The differences between these pieces and Tucker's are obvious, but the point remains that the theme of the latter is not unusual.

One of the elements that sets the work apart is the skill with which it is handled from a stylistic point of view. It is impressive to see how much literary artifice Tucker manages to incorporate in
his didactic essay. He makes use of every opportunity to endow characters with metaphoric names. There are the Trifles, Tom the trifler and Susannah, with whom he trifles. Tom's flighty friend and lesser imitator is appropriately named Will Butterfly. Three wealthy citizens are Mr. Stockwell, a merchant, Col. Wheatfield, a member of the landed gentry, and Lawyer Gabble. The last is a particularly appropriate name, through which Tucker takes a good-humored poke at his own profession. He names the lawyer after the sound of the goose, suggesting that he speaks rapidly and unintelligibly. In contrast to these upstanding citizens are Captain Kite, Major Hawk, and Dick Vulture. From their names we know that the third is a scavenger, and the first two are predators. Metaphoric names are common in literature, especially drama, and have been since the Renaissance.

Tucker employs some amusing and ironic word play and imagery in his essay. The Butterfly family is "always on the wing." The sum of money Tom lost the previous spring is punningly termed "trifling." Tom's and Susannah's relationship is perfectly represented by their game of Loo. His king takes her queen as a matter of course, and Tom's declaration that he has her "snug" applies both to the game and to their engagement. Cousin Tom plays on the senses of name-changing when he gives Susannah the locket she takes as a proposal. Finally, after identifying her firm betrothal with the constant sun, Tucker makes Miss Trifle associate her "fiancée" with the changeable moon, whose light is deceiving.

The limited plot of "The Jilting" could imply more than it states. For instance, Susannah's mother is a widow. Since Susannah
is nineteen when she writes the letter and has been "engaged" for about eighteen months, that would make her about seventeen and one-half when the events she describes occurred. Legal majority for a woman in Virginia was eighteen, so in "courting" Susannah, Tom might have been insinuating himself into a position whereby he could have absconded with anything she would have inherited in six months. If it were stated that Tom is the son of Susannah's uncle, his inheriting the fortune instead of Susannah would be a matter of course as he would be the closer relation. Since it is not so stated, Tom's attention to his cousin could have been an attempt to make himself appear to be a more respectable nephew to whom to entrust a large fortune. By cozying up to Cousin Sukey, Tom might have been seeming to save their uncle the trouble of splitting the fortune, which would have risked familial dissension, and in reality have been robbing the girl of her share of the estate. And was it merely coincidence that it was Will Butterfly, whom Tom had just overpaid by $300, who started testing Susannah's affections after Tom no longer had any use for her? As a lawyer Tucker would have been familiar with such possibilities, which go to show that the plot which some would call sketchy could be quite imaginatively complex.

The literary high point of Tucker's essay must rest in his characterization of Susannah Trifle. Simply the mechanics of an elderly male author assuming the persona of a nineteen-year-old woman for the largest part of the piece requires skill. Tucker attributes a somewhat rustic nature to the character, as indicated by such unusual constructions as "I never see him, but what I try to remind him" and
others already mentioned (see note number 9 to the text, above). Susannah also uses a very informal, conversational style, punctuated with asides such as "Now dear Doctor, could there be a firmer engagement under the sun?" The predominant trait of Susannah Trifle is her naïveté. To put it mildly, the girl is a simpleton. After waiting a year and a half, she is still in doubt about her cousin's intentions, thinking he may have forgotten his own "proposal." At no point does she mention having discussed the matter with her mother. Miss Trifle takes as a firm bond Tom's assumption that they will be married, without, as far as we know, a literal proposal of marriage. She sees no possibility of an ulterior motive in the actions of her cousin, whom she still regards as honorable, if absent-minded. Finally, she publishes the most intimate details of her personal life in a column which everyone in her neighborhood reads, in a period when the divulgence of problems such as hers was considered a disgrace and a scandal.

By constructing such an outlandish character at the outset, Tucker establishes a playful, amusing tone. Susannah's ridiculous, and harmless, situation contrasts sharply with the later fatal case of Captain and Mrs. Lee. The former is a fantastic story, whose characters' obvious faults are pleasantly instructive. The latter is a true example of what could happen if Dr. Cecil's prescription is not filled. The stark contrast and sudden union of these two modes of instruction makes Tucker a predecessor of modern "black" humor.

The familiar essay is important to scholars, not only for its qualities as a work of literature, but also for what the topics
addressed in the essay imply about the time in which it was composed. The reliability of the author must be weighed, and Judge Tucker, who officially dealt with cases concerning subjects such as unlawful gaming, execution of wills, and breach of promise, must be evaluated as highly trustworthy. This essay is unusual for the large number of social issues it addresses. Tucker notices political affairs in Tom's election to the assembly after his inheritance, which suggests that money sometimes took the place of ability in swaying political decisions. Diligence and class difference are touched upon in the suggestion that Susannah's husband should be a farmer instead of a "gentleman"—or at least not one like Tom. This judgement renders the woman's class rather ambiguous, for though she seems well-bred enough for the upper-class functions of her uncle, her lack of sophistication seems to assign her to the less leisure-oriented middle class. The military gets a pretty thorough censure in both sections of the essay, implying that officers were not necessarily gentlemen. Tom's having just returned from college seems to indicate that as much folly, or worse, is produced at such institutions as is wisdom.

There are also inferences to be drawn from the essay's attitude toward wealth and gambling. The period in which the piece was written was a prosperous one, with many people growing rich by supplying the new country's needs. The wealthy characters Stockwell, Wheatfield, Gabble, and the Trifles' uncle are reflections of this state of affairs. Tucker warns the young reader to be wary of their opposites Kite, Hawk, Vulture, and Tom, who are not productive in themselves, but rather prey upon others. The story of Tom Trifle may
reflect a pattern of wealth that was earned under the old, stable colonial order being inherited by a generation which had nothing to do with the earning of it and whose future was none too certain being separated from a now very hostile mother country and being pessimistically squandered.

Tucker's treatment of one very special woman in his essay invites inferences as to the status of women in general in his time, especially with regard to marriage. Miss Trifle's writing to resolve the embarrassment over her courtship indicates that women were very concerned with their marital status. She says that she regulates her behavior accordingly, suggesting that marriage was considered the most acceptable goal of a woman's life. As Daniel Blake Smith puts it, "The role of women was relatively easily defined and maintained through the generations. Women were to serve in marriage as man's helpmate..." Later he elaborates: "thus, the failure of a woman to marry seemed to many men a violation of her cultural social responsibilities: to bear and raise children and to manage the domestic affairs in a family." It is from Susannah's failure in the first step of her social role, and her inability to see the reasons why, that much of the piece's humor springs. Tucker uses her extreme naiveté to expose the mistakes he thought he saw young people, especially women, making in marriage. Susannah gave Tom complete control over their relationship by letting him essentially bypass courtship. Instead of having had to entreat a lock of hair from his intended, Tom gave her one of his own in a locket, arrogantly having assumed that she wanted it. He then presumed she wanted an expensive wedding
coach, which, in fact, she thought was too extravagant. At no time did they ask anyone's advice. Through his humorous exaggeration Tucker seems to be exposing a current trend among women to rush into marriage before adequately assessing a suitor's qualities and without proper guidance. As was noted above (note number 19 to the text), there was a decrease of parental influence in marriages as evidenced by brief engagements. Daniel Blake Smith notes that an increasing number of daughters "married without or against the advice of their parents and kin" in middle- and upper-middle-class planter families through the latter half of the eighteenth century. Tucker shows by the travesty of Susannah's example that marital felicity depended upon properly gauging a future partner's character, and that this responsibility was especially incumbent upon the woman, who had the ultimate power of decision. What Tucker advocates is a return to what Smith calls the ideal courtship, an elaborate, stylized affair which some girls prolonged into a "siege" so that they might judge the wealth, moral character, and eloquence of the young man to whom they would be subordinate for most of their lives.

Even more compelling than the inferences Tucker expected his audience to draw are the implications that arise from a comparison of Tucker's and his editor William Wirt's respective Old Bachelor writings, with especial reference to those on women, the former's "Jilt-ing," and its autobiographical qualities. Wirt's series contains the usual familiar essay fare, with essays on manners and morals. Specifically, the series treats industry, avarice, and patriotism, among other topics. Jeffersonian politics and Deistic religion are
advocated. There is a definite concentration on instruction more than amusement, with a focus on education, especially of women. The literary high point of the series is the characterization of the male chauvinist Obadiah Squaretoes, for, aside from a well developed persona and many fictitious letters, Wirt's series is not outstanding for its variety of literary devices. Tucker's numbers deal with many of the same subjects as Wirt's but in more diverse forms. He too employs the topics mentioned above, except for formal education, and does so through a much wider range of device including allegory, dream vision, satire, and the eastern tale, as well as plain exposition and fictitious letter. Susannah Trifle is the most skillfully portrayed of the three female characters and shares with Moses Do-little of numbers seventeen and eighteen the distinction of being overtly humorous. From the beginning, Tucker's writings seem to contradict the sentiments of Wirt's series toward women, and number twenty-seven even ignores Wirt's explicit instructions. Even though Tucker was supposed to be writing for a second collected edition of The Old Bachelor, there is evidence that he never expected that essay to be accepted.

The most direct evidence of conflicting motives between the men occurs in two letters from Wirt concerning essays sent to him by Tucker. Wirt states, "In your first communication you salute me by the name of 'Old Squaretoes'--this I know is waggery--but it will be necessary to change the address, because a number has already appeared from a correspondent who assumed that as his real name" (Wirt's emphasis). The other letter warns Tucker about crediting
sources he used. Tucker could not logically have expected his number twenty-seven, in which he excerpts from an unacknowledged Annual Register under Wirt's pseudonym, to be considered after these admonitions. The name Tucker addresses Wirt by indicates a diverging opinion between the men on women's rights, for the chauvinist Squaretoes is one of the least favorably drawn characters of Wirt's series.

The difference of opinion suggested in Wirt's letter is substantiated in the men's Old Bachelor essays. Throughout his series Wirt and his contributors present women in the most favorable light, urging their better treatment at men's hands. The theme starts in the fifth number of the series with a story about the heroic Roman woman Agrippina. From her example Wirt draws the conclusion that the only hope for resurrecting the genius and character of America, which has been slipping since the Revolution, rests with women. Three numbers later a letter from one Tim Lovetruth states that the way to start a renaissance is to educate women. The next issue, number nine, contains the letter from Obadiah Squaretoes. He is cast in a very unfavorable light when he complains that the contribution on Agrippina has elicited rebellion from his wife and youngest daughter, who have left their domestic duties to petition for the right to improve themselves. The number following seems to propose a compromise, saying that women should still be the fair sex, soft and delicate, but that their minds should not be neglected. Tucker's efforts concerning women stand in direct opposition to Wirt's feminist ideas. In his first number he places a letter from a woman who congratulates
Obadiah Squaretoes on his appearance in the *Old Bachelor* series. She goes on to recount her infatuation with him as a young girl years before, describing his elegant dress and manners with obvious relish. The next essay extant in Tucker's series is number five, which he called "The History of Contentment." He personifies contentment as a female whose symbols are a spindle and distaff, a bottle of clear spring water, and a loaf of plain, but excellent, household bread. In essay number fourteen, Tucker praises Virginian women for their domesticity. He describes a cycle of fertility at his own home, through which his wife is generally pregnant in spring and the resulting child is usually christened around Christmas. He calls women "Penelopes" and says that they write as well as or better than their husbands and brothers, though the last might boast of a classical college education. Since in his complimentary essays Tucker treats women as uneducated, romantic, fertile domestics, it is no wonder that this essay censuring women conflicts with Wirt's sentiments. Susannah Trifle, by her naiveté and rusticity, shows herself to be just the sort of ignorant, dependent woman who would not appreciate the efforts of Wirt. She appears as just the opposite of Obadiah Squaretoes' independent daughter, who says, "I am now eighteen, capable, if ever, to think for myself, and I hope that in this free country, women have some rights." Susannah Trifle is "now nineteen years old," unable to think for herself, judging from her predicament, and refuses the one right universally accorded women: to choose whether to accept a suitor and to act upon that decision. Perhaps Tucker started out trying to present an alternate view on the strengths of women from
that of Wirt, but when only one of his efforts (possibly the Suzan-
nah Thankful letter mentioned in the introduction), or none, appeared
in print, and he ridiculed the fair sex, it seems hard to believe
that he thought Wirt would accept his views as a viable alternative.

Further autobiographical reasons for this assertion may be
traced through the extant Wirt and Tucker correspondence. Though the
following details could have been unconsciously incorporated in "The
Jilting," their presence would seem to greatly enrich the ultimate
meaning of the essay. In late August of 1811, signs of strain show
between the men in a letter from Tucker to Wirt about the latter's
essay number twenty-four, on the cold intellectual. By early Sept­
ember Tucker writes to Wirt that he has written eighteen essays, and
expresses doubt as to how many more he will produce. In the same
letter Tucker refers to his talents as like the "borrowed light, even
that of the Moon" (Tucker's emphasis). He was not writing for the
newspaper series then appearing, but rather for a second book edition
to be published soon after the newspaper essays were gathered into
the first. Wirt was "bespeaking materials" for this second volume
in August, 1811. It is not too far fetched that Wirt expected the
newspaper essays to be collected promptly into the first volume, and
that he promised Tucker inclusion in the second book when "The Old
Bachelor" stopped in December, 1811. On September 11, 1812, Tucker
says that he had assumed that Wirt had intended to stop the series.
One year later a letter from Tucker tells Wirt that "The Old Bach­
elor" has been silent for more than eighteen months, and proposes a
new "Nuga. Hermit of the Mountain" series. On the same day,
Tucker started a "Hermit" notebook with a note that he had tried to console himself that summer for illness and his daughter Frances' death by writing several trifles (nuga means trifle), some of which he might copy there. Suppose one of those trifles was the story of Susannah Trifle. Her eighteen-month engagement might be the promise by Wirt of inclusion in his second volume, then eighteen months overdue. That same amount of time from the summer of 1813 coincides with the end of the newspaper series in December, 1811. Could Cousin Tom's ability to "jump over the moon if he chose it" refer to Wirt's skipping over Tucker's talents as he described them on September 4, 1811? It is possible that Tucker did not write many more essays after number eighteen in the fall of 1811, but rather added to them until he gradually reached twenty-seven in the summer of 1813, keeping the "For the old Batchelor" format until he thought of the new "Hermit" one. These events seem to show Tucker to be a much more skillful writer than has been previously suspected. For in this essay he appears to be writing on two levels simultaneously. On the one hand the essay is a piece of "black" humor designed to chastise youth, on the other it is a complaint to a neglectful friend.
NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION


2 Mary H. Coleman, St. George Tucker, Citizen of No Mean City (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1938), p. 118.


4 Davis, p. 323.

5 Davis, pp. 245-46.


8 Turrentine, p. 20.


10 Cullen, p. 6.

11 Turrentine, p. 34.

12 Turrentine, p. 34; Cullen, p. 7.
13 Turrentine, p. 36.
15 Carson, pp. 61, 67.
16 Coleman, p. 21.
17 Coleman, pp. 22-23.
18 Cullen, p. 11.
20 Carson, p. 23.
21 Kerr, pp. 46-49.
22 Turrentine, pp. 40-41.
23 Turrentine, pp. 42-43.
24 Turrentine, p. 61.
25 Turrentine, pp. 71-72.
26 Turrentine, pp. 77, 79.
27 Turrentine, pp. 82-84.
28 Turrentine, pp. 88-90.
29 Turrentine, pp. 91, 95.
30 Turrentine, p. 98.
31 Cullen, p. 59.
32 Coleman, p. 87.
33 Turrentine, pp. 107-09.
34 Turrentine, pp. 110-11, 114.
35 Turrentine, p. 118.
36 Turrentine, p. 122.
37 Turrentine, pp. 125-27.
38  Turrentine, p. 143.
39  Turrentine, p. 146.
40  Turrentine, pp. 150-51, 155.
41  Coleman, p. 106.
42  Turrentine, pp. 168, 174.
43  Turrentine, pp. 176, 202.
44  Turrentine, pp. 193, 196.
46  Davis, p. 356.
47  Dolmetsch, p. 258.
48  Dolmetsch, p. 262.
NOTES TO THE TEXT

1 Batchellor. Though not specifically listed by the Oxford English Dictionary (hereafter OED), the word is an archaic form of bachelor, the spelling used by William Wirt, founder of The Old Bachelor series for which Tucker was writing. The literary figure of an old bachelor was well known at this time, the first having been created by Francis Hopkinson, in 1770 ("Hopkinson, Francis," The New International Encyclopedia, 1905 ed.).

2 Doctor Cecil. Tucker adopts the persona of Doctor Robert Cecil, the old bachelor of the series, which had been heretofore employed only by William Wirt.

3 Cousin. In general, it was quite common for cousins to marry each other during the period. Daniel Blake Smith notes a rising trend in the number of first-cousin marriages in the eighteenth-century Chesapeake (Daniel Blake Smith, Inside the Great House [Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1980], p. 186, hereafter Smith). According to Jane Carson, by mid-eighteenth-century "three hundred Tidewater families made up the ruling class; all these were closely related after generations of intermarriage within the class. Any group of guests composed of neighbors and friends were largely kinsmen, therefore, and nearly everyone addressed everyone else as 'Cousin!'" (Jane Carson, Colonial Virginians at Play [Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press, 1965], p. 7, hereafter Carson, Colonial Virginians).
The author knew personally of at least two cases of unhappily married cousins. Frances Tucker, St. George's eldest sister, married her cousin, Henry Tucker, who was not very affectionate. From Coleman it is known that Henry "was clever, sociable, fond of jaunts to New York and other foreign parts, and deeply immersed in political matters" (p. 7). Richard Randolph, his stepson mentioned in the introduction, at nineteen married his own first cousin, Judith Randolph, seventeen, in 1789. Four years later Richard was accused of killing his child borne by his wife's sister, Anne Cary Randolph. He was acquitted, but the scandal clung, especially since the then President, Thomas Jefferson, was his uncle. Richard never fully recovered from the ignominious trial and died in 1796 (Coleman, p. 109).

ask'd: asked. The grammatical rule governing the apostrophe encompassed much more in Tucker's day than in ours. An apostrophe often indicates the omission of the letter e. Occasionally, Tucker omits both the letter and the punctuation, as in returnd two lines below.

Engagement. This and other capitalizations, misplaced by modern standards, are Tucker's eccentric application of the Germanic convention to capitalize all nouns, which was abandoned by about the year 1800 in English.

College. Probably The College of William and Mary, where Tucker attended and taught, was in his mind. There were two other colleges in Virginia at the time, Hampden-Sydney College (1776) and Augusta College (1749), subsequently Washington College, and finally Washington and Lee University.
last Spring-twelvemonth: a year ago last spring.
races. Horse races were a highly popular form of entertainment for all classes. Tucker must have remembered the regular spring and fall races held at the excellent track at Williamsburg when he was a student there just before the Revolution. There were two-, three-, and four-mile courses. Purses were donated by subscribers, and were set at 100 pounds for the first day and 50 pounds thereafter, usually for a week. Winners had to take two four-mile heats out of three (Carson, Colonial Virginians, p. 257).

our part of the Country. This reference, the "says I . . . says he" form, and other unusual constructions seem to indicate this character's rustic diction.

on a visit at my uncles. The event Tucker describes is a typical gathering of the type used to introduce men to eligible girls. As Smith says, "these festive affairs, with an abundance of food and drink, dancing, horseracing and card-playing, often lasted for several days. . . ." An invitation to one such party in 1791 made its host's intention clear, saying, "No married people but his brothers invited" (pp. 130-31).

Sukey: diminutive of Susannah. Tucker knew at least two persons of this nickname: one was the daughter of a servant given to his daughter Frances when she married her former tutor, John Coalter (Coleman, p. 133), the other is mentioned in a letter from Polly Carter. See note number 29, "an Academy for teaching the English Language," below.

with some of his hair in it. The gift of a lock of hair to
wear seems to have been fairly common at the time. Two examples have survived in correspondence, and show the custom to be non-sex-specific. Joseph Nourse, in 1784, requested a lock from Maria Bull which he said he would "wear next to my Heart." More to the point, St. George's first wife, Frances, wore a "Bracelet" of his hair.

13 Loo, Lanterloo is a card game whose name derives from the French Lanturelu, the meaningless refrain of a popular seventeenth-century song (OED). As a forerunner of bridge, the game is played in "rounds" with the object of taking as many "tricks" as possible. When playing for limited stakes, those who win no tricks must each supply an equal portion of a fixed wager. With unlimited stakes all losers must each supply an amount equal to the previous wager, thus allowing for tremendous increase of the stakes (Carson, Colonial Virginians, pp. 66-68, 278-80).

14 snug: in a state of ease, comfort, or quiet enjoyment. Snug also means enabling one to live in comfort and comparative ease (OED).

15 Gig: a light two-wheeled one-horse carriage. More specific than shay: a derivation of chaise, any of several kinds of lightweight carriage, some with a collapsible top, having two or four wheels, and drawn by one or two horses (OED).

16 Philadelphia. Along with New York, New Haven, Bridgeport, Newark, and Wilmington, Philadelphia was an early center of the carriage industry (Richard Hegel, Carriages from New Haven [Hamden: The Shoestring Press, 1974], p. 5).

17 Mr. Stockwells. The source of the names Tom Trifle, Will Butterfly, Col. Wheatfield, Lawyer Gabble, and the three gamblers
Kite, Hawk, and Vulture, below, is not clear. There is a character named Mr. Stockwell, a wealthy merchant, whose son inherits a Jamaican estate, in Richard Cumberland's play *The West Indian* (1771), with which Tucker, a West Indian merchant for a time himself, may have been familiar. Perhaps the names derive from such dramatic sources. The names Tom Trusty and Will Sparkish appear in *Spectator* Number 179 as exemplars of the right and wrong way to treat one's wife and children.

Ball. Tucker probably did not mean the grand affair connoted by the word today. In Williamsburg an array of events could have easily fit the term. There were palace functions, tavern assemblies, impromptu dances after concerts, and balls in town houses or plantation homes. Spring and fall assemblies were customary, as were the races at those times, but dances and races could, and did, take place at any other time as well (Carson, *Colonial Virginians*, pp. 152-57).

married sometime in September, or October. Since Tom's "proposal" took place in the spring, there could only have been about a six-month interval preceding the marriage. Smith sees brief engagements of a few weeks or months as evidence of the lessening influence of parents on their children's marriages in the eighteenth-century (p. 132).

springs: a resort community, noted especially for its healthful, natural mineral waters. Tucker used to go to Sweet Springs, in Monroe County (now West Virginia) for the summer. There were other well-known springs, namely Berkeley, Hot, and White Sulphur. Sweet Springs was close to the Cabells' property in Warminster
(see introduction) and to the Coalters' in Staunton, Virginia (see note number 11, "Sukey," above).

Assembly: the state legislature. The qualifications to serve in the Virginia General Assembly, as of October 1, 1792, were that a candidate be "a discreet and proper person, being a freeholder, and a bona fide resident of the district sought." To settle one contested election a freeholder was defined as one who possessed fifty acres of land six months before the election (Susan Lee Foard, "The Virginia General Assembly 1788-1792," M. A. Thesis, The College of William and Mary 1966, pp. 10, 139).

Gig and Tandem: a two-wheeled vehicle drawn by two horses, one harnessed before the other (OED). The reasons for Tucker's underlining in the essay are not clear.

Pharaoh-bank. Pharaoh, or faro, is a card game allowing players to bet on the order in which certain cards will appear when taken singly from the top of the pack. A Pharaoh-bank refers to the banker's deposit of money against which the other players put their stakes (OED).

In the fall of 1802, Major Robert Bailey was pronounced guilty of keeping and exhibiting an illegal Pharaoh-bank. In a letter to counsel, Bailey accused the judge, St. George Tucker, of offering to compromise the prosecution against him for 100 guineas. In the ensuing investigation Tucker was commended for his fine record (Turrentine, pp. 246-248). The incident may suggest a reason for Tucker's use of this particular gambling device, and for the military titles of two of the gamblers.
English annual Register. Tucker draws on *The New annual register, or General repository of history, politics, arts, sciences, and literature for the year 1783-1784 (1784-1785).* There are renderings of the life of Lee in two other publications, *The London Magazine, 2* (March 1784), 252, and *The Gentleman's Magazine, 54, No. 3* (March 1784), 226-27, but notably not in the other Annual Register available to Tucker, *The Annual register of world events: a review of the year 1784 (1785).* The principal difference between Tucker's copy and the original is that his omits the final paragraph, which is reproduced below for the sake of completeness:

Mr. Lee requested that he might give the signal for the executioner to put a period to their existence, which being granted, after a few moments private ejaculations, he dropped his handkerchief, and the false bottom on which they stood in an instant fell in, and deprived them of all sense. Mr. Lee made some few momentary struggles.

Other minor substantive differences will be noted at their occurrence in the text.

25 *the old Bailey.* The Old Bailey in London was the seat of the Central Criminal Court, and was so called from the ancient bailey or bailiff of the city wall between Lud Gate and New Gate, within which it was situated (*OED*).

26 *Ensign:* an obsolete rank, which formerly denoted a commissioned officer of the lowest grade in the infantry. It was replaced by the rank of sub-lieutenant (*OED*).
Company: the subdivision of an infantry regiment commanded by a Captain (OED).

attach'd: married. The Miss I_______ is next referred to as Mrs. Lee. The initial in Tucker's source is a J, and from The London Magazine it is known that it stands for "Jefferies." There was no unmarried actress by that name playing in London at the time of the incidents described. There was a Mrs. Jeffries who acted there from 1764 to 1771. Perhaps she was misnamed in the article.

an Academy for teaching the English Language. In a letter dated 1802, Polly Carter, Tucker's stepdaughter wrote to him about an occasion on which she and Cousin Sukey (probably not literally; see note number 3, "Cousin," above) lost their share of a candy reward for speaking bad grammar at her school for young ladies.

Tucker's eldest daughter, Anne Frances, was taught deportment by a Mrs. Hallam, formerly Miss Sarah Hallam, a chief actress of the famous London Company of Comedians and a renowned beauty. Both facts may suggest reasons for Tucker's employment of the extract (Coleman, pp. 100, 138).

gambling. Gambling was a rampant disease in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England and infected all areas of society. The English were noted for their cold-blooded wagering, and it was under these circumstances that young Virginians were educated in fashionable society. William Byrd III was reputed to have taken to gaming while at the Middle Temple (one of the Inns of Court). As Jane Carson says of the Virginia gentry, "no topic of idle conversation was too frivolous to call forth the most familiar of all retorts: 'I'll lay you
ten to one" (Carson, *Colonial Virginians*, pp. 49, 53).

31 *Farthing*: an originally silver, subsequently copper, finally bronze British coin, which was worth one-quarter of a British penny before it was withdrawn in 1961. There were twelve pennies per shilling, and twenty shillings per pound (*OED*).

32 *Guinea*: a British gold coin worth twenty-one shillings. First struck in 1663, it was worth twenty shillings until 1717, when it increased in value. It was withdrawn in 1813 (*OED*). The guinea continued to be used, though, until 1817, when it was replaced by the sovereign. It was, even as late as the twentieth century, customary to refer to professional fees, art pieces, and the like in guineas ("Guinea," *The New International Encyclopedia*, 1905 ed.).

33 Lord Townsend's draft on the ordnance office. Tucker misspells the name of the Honorable George Townshend (1721-1807) who had held, among other posts, the Master Generalcy of the Ordnance from April through December 1783. It seems likely that Captain Lee was taken in forging the draft of an official three months out of office ("Townshend, Hon. George," *The House of Commons 1754-1790* [1964]).

*Ordnance* refers to the branch of an army that procures, stores, and issues weapons, munitions, etc. (*OED*).

34 *Nemo Repente fuit turpissimus*: "No man ever became extremely wicked all at once." Though there is no obvious source for the quotation in Tucker's known library, Latin was one of his basic studies (see introduction, p. 3).
NOTES TO THE CRITIQUE

2 William Wirt et al., The Old Bachelor (Richmond: Enquirer Press, 1814), No. 11, p. 63.
3 Davis, p. 280.
5 Joseph Addison and Richard Steele et al., The Spectator, 10 Aug. 1711 (No. 110).
7 "Thoughts on marriage," The Columbian Almanac for 1794 (Wilmington: Brynberg & Andrews, 1794), May.
8 "Family unhappiness the frequent Cause of Immoral Conduct," Columbian 1794, July.
9 "Male coquetry, contemptible," American Museum, 6, No. 3 (September 1789), 201-03.
10 The law of primogeniture was repealed by statute under the Jefferson administration in the late eighteenth-century. Since no other children are mentioned, it might be assumed that Tom and Susannah were equally likely choices for heirs.
Smith, p. 247.

Smith, p. 168.

Cullen, Appendix C.

Smith, pp. 61-62.

Smith, p. 129.

Smith, pp. 142-143.

Smith, p. 133.

Dolmetsch, p. 265.

William Wirt to St. George Tucker, August 7, 1811, in The Tucker-Coleman Collection, Swem Library; Dolmetsch, p. 267.

The Wirt essays in the following discussion are drawn from The Old Bachelor; Tucker's essays are part of St. George Tucker, "For the old Batchelor," in The Tucker-Coleman Collection, Swem Library.

Dolmetsch, p. 267.

Tucker to Wirt, September 4, 1811, Wirt Papers, Maryland Historical Society.

Dolmetsch, p. 265.

Tucker to Wirt, September 11, 1812, in The Tucker-Coleman Collection, Swem Library. This remained in Tucker's papers because it was never sent. The letter breaks off after two paragraphs with the notation: "Mr. Wirt arriving at this moment, I showed him the above."

Tucker to Wirt, September 12, 1813, Wirt Papers, Maryland Historical Society.

The notebook is in The Tucker-Coleman Collection, Swem Library.
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________. Letters to William Wirt. Wirt Papers, Ms. #1011, Maryland Historical Society.


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