TO THE IDLER.

Sir,

You have lately entertained your admirers with the case of an unfortunate husband, and, thereby, given a demonstrative proof you are not averse even to hear appeals and terminate differences between man and wife; I, therefore, take the liberty to present you with the case of an injured lady, which, as it chiefly relates to what I think the lawyers call a point of law, I shall do in as juridical a manner as I am capable, and submit it to the consideration of the learned gentlemen of that profession.

_Imprimis_. In the style of my marriage articles, a marriage was _had and solemnized_ about six months ago, between me and Mr. Savecharges, a gentleman possessed of a plentiful fortune of his own, and one who, I was persuaded, would improve, and not spend, mine.

Before our marriage, Mr. Savecharges had all along preferred the salutary exercise of walking on foot to the distempered ease, as he terms it, of lolling in a chariot: but, notwithstanding his fine panegyrics on walking, the great advantages the infantry were in the sole possession of, and the many dreadful dangers they escaped, he found I had very different notions of an equipage, and was not easily to be converted, or gained over to his party.

An equipage I was determined to have, whenever I married. I too well knew the disposition of my intended consort to leave the providing one entirely to his honour, and flatter myself Mr. Savecharges has, in the articles made previous to our marriage, _agreed to keep me a coach_; but lest I should be mistaken, or the attorneys should not have done me justice in methodizing or legalizing these half dozen words, I will set about and transcribe that part of the agreement, which will explain the matter to you much better than can be done by one who is so deeply interested in the event; and show on what foundation I build my hopes of being soon under the transporting, delightful denomination of a fashionable lady, who enjoys the exalted and much-envied felicity of bowling about in her own coach.

"And further the said Solomon Savecharges, for divers good causes and considerations him hereunto moving, hath agreed, and doth hereby agree, that the said Solomon Savecharges shall and will, so soon as conveniently may be after the solemnization of the said intended marriage, at his own proper cost and charges, find and provide a _certain vehicle, or four-wheel-carriage, commonly called or known by the name of a coach_; which said vehicle, or wheel-carriage, so called or known by the name of a coach, shall be _used and enjoyed_ by the said Sukey Modish, his intended wife," (pray mind that, Mr. Idler,) "at such times and in such manner as she, the said Sukey Modish, shall think fit and convenient."
Such, Mr. Idler, is the agreement my passionate admirer entered into; and what the dear, frugal husband calls a performance of it, remains to be described. Soon after the ceremony of signing and sealing was over, our wedding-clothes being sent home, and, in short, every thing in readiness except the coach, my own shadow was scarcely more constant than my passionate lover in his attendance on me: wearied by his perpetual importunities for what he called a completion of his bliss, I consented to make him happy; in a few days I gave him my hand, and, attended by Hymen in his saffron robes, retired to a country-seat of my husband’s, where the honey-moon flew over our heads ere we had time to recollect ourselves, or think of our engagements in town. Well, to town we came, and you may be sure, Sir, I expected to step into my coach on my arrival here; but, what was my surprise and disappointment, when, instead of this, he began to sound in my ears? "that the interest of money was low, very low; and what a terrible thing it was to be encumbered with a little regiment of servants in these hard times!" I could easily perceive what all this tended to, but would not seem to understand him; which made it highly necessary for Mr. Savecharges to explain himself more intelligibly; to harp upon and protest he dreaded the expense of keeping a coach. And truly, for his part, he could not conceive how the pleasure resulting from such a convenience could be any way adequate to the heavy expense attending it. I now thought it high time to speak with equal plainness, and told him, as the fortune I brought fairly entitled me to ride in my own coach, and as I was sensible his circumstances would very well afford it, he must pardon me if I insisted on a performance of his agreement.

I appeal to you, Mr. Idler, whether any thing could be more civil, more complaisant, than this? And, would you believe it, the creature in return, a few days after, accosted me, in an offended tone, with, "Madam, I can now tell you, your coach is ready; and since you are so passionately fond of one, I intend you the honour of keeping a pair of horses.--You insisted upon having an article of pin-money, and horses are no part of my agreement." Base, designing wretch!--I beg your pardon, Mr. Idler, the very recital of such mean, ungentleman-like behaviour fires my blood, and lights up a flame within me. But hence, thou worst of monsters, ill-timed Rage! and let me not spoil my cause for want of temper.

Now, though I am convinced I might make a worse use of part of the pin-money, than by extending my bounty towards the support of so useful a part of the brute creation; yet, like a true-born Englishwoman, I am so tenacious of my rights and privileges, and moreover so good a friend to the gentlemen of the law, that I protest, Mr. Idler, sooner than tamely give up the point, and be quibbled out of my right, I will receive my pin-money, as it were, with one hand, and pay it to them with the other; provided they will give me, or, which is the same thing, my trustees, encouragement to commence a suit against this dear, frugal husband of mine.

And of this I can't have the least shadow of doubt, inasmuch as I have been told by very good authority, it is somewhere or other laid down as a rule "That whenever the law doth give any thing to one, it giveth impliedly whatever is necessary for taking and enjoying the same." Now, I would gladly know what enjoyment I, or any lady in the kingdom, can have of a coach without horses? The answer is obvious--None at all! For, as Serjeant Catlyne very wisely observes, "though a coach has wheels, to the end it may thereby and by virtue thereof be enabled to move; yet in point of utility it may as well have none, if they are not put in motion by means of its vital parts, that is, the horses."

And, therefore, Sir, I humbly hope you and the learned in the law will be of opinion, that two certain animals, or quadruped creatures, commonly called or known by the name of horses, ought to be annexed to, and go along with, the coach. SUKEY SAVECHARGES

(1) Quando lex aliquid alicui concedit, concedere videtur et id, sine quo res ipsa esse non potest. Coke on Littleton, 56. a.--ED.

(2) An unknown correspondent.

(The end)
Samuel Johnson's essay: Idler No. 54