

was the right thing. As they were discussing marriage plans one evening, the future Mrs. G. N. made a few remarks that bothered G. N.

So, to make certain he was marrying the right girl, G. N. drew up a four-page document of stipulations she was to agree to before they got married. The document, neatly typed and looking very legal, covered every segment of living G. N. could think of. There was one section on religion: what church they would go to, how often they would attend, how much they would donate. Another section covered children: how many and when.

In detail, G. N. outlined the kind of friends they would have, his future wife's employment status, where they would live, how their income would be spent. To finish the document, G. N. devoted half a page to listing specific habits the girl must break or must acquire. This covered such habits as smoking, drinking, makeup, entertainment, and so on.

When G. N.'s prospective bride reviewed his ultimatum, she did what you would expect. She sent it back with a note saying, "The usual marriage clause, 'for better or for worse,' is good enough for everyone else and it's good enough for me. The whole thing is off."

As G. N. was relating his experience to me, he said worriedly, "Now, what was so wrong in writing out this agreement? After all, marriage is a big step. You can't be too careful."

But G. N. was wrong. You *can* be too careful, too cautious, not only in planning a marriage but in planning anything in the world where things get done. The standards can be too high. G. N.'s approach to marriage was very much like his approach to his work, his savings, his friendships, everything else.