

Empire had been continually repealing the old disabilities of woman, and the legislative movement in their favor continued with unabated force from Constantine to Justinian, and appeared also in some of the early laws of the barbarians. But in the whole feudal legislation, women were placed in a much lower legal position than in the pagan Empire. In addition to the personal restrictions which grew necessarily out of the Catholic Christian doctrines concerning divorce, and the subordination of the weaker sex, we find numerous and stringent enactments, which rendered it impossible for women to succeed to any considerable amount of property, and which almost reduced them to the alternative of marriage or a nunnery. The complete inferiority of the sex was continually maintained by law; and that generous public opinion which in Rome had frequently revolted against the injustice done to girls, in depriving them of the greater part of the inheritance of their fathers, totally disappeared. Wherever the canon law has been the basis of legislation, we find laws of succession sacrificing the interests of daughters and of wives, and a state of public opinion which has been formed and regulated by these laws; nor was any serious attempt made to abolish them till the close of the last century. The French Revolutionists, though rejecting the proposal of Siéyès and Condorcet to accord political emancipation to women, established at least an equal succession of sons and daughters, and thus initiated a great reformation of both law and opinion, which sooner or later must traverse the world" (Lecky's "Hist. Morals," ii., 338-340).

"No society," says Maine, "which preserves any tincture of Christian institutions is likely to restore to married women the personal liberty conferred on them by the middle Roman law" ("Ancient Law," 158).

VIII.

UNDER Christianity patriotism, so necessary to the defense of the state, was continually discouraged. The heroes of Rome could inspire the Christians with no admiration, and they steadfastly, from the first, refused to take part in any demonstrations expressive of attachment to country; with a home and a country in another world, they were, consistently enough, indifferent to the secular interests of this. When Rome was invaded by the Vandal, the invasion was regarded "as a just and heaven-commissioned visitation," and "resistance a vain, almost an impious struggle to avert inevitable punishment" (Milman's "Latin Christianity," ii. 206).

"Asceticism, drawing all the enthusiasm of Christendom to the desert life, and elevating as an ideal the extreme and absolute abnegation of all patriotism, formed," says Lecky, "the culmination of the movement, and was undoubtedly one cause of the downfall of the Roman Empire" ("Hist. Morals," ii. 141).

"The genius and the virtue that might have defended the Empire were engaged in fierce disputes about the Pelagian controversy, at the