

## TWO VIEWS OF LADY MACBETH.

RESOLVED—"That Lady Macbeth was a greater criminal than her husband."

## A PLEA FOR THE AFFIRMATIVE.

Since the beginning of the world, woman has ever assumed a leading role. From the time when she and the serpent joined to introduce crime into the universe she has participated in many a deed, good bad and indifferent.

She has set examples of the greatest virtue, yet has often renewed her old evil alliance formed in the Garden of Eden. Lovers have raved of her beauty, while philosophers have railed at her vanity. In fact her whole history is a chronicle of contradictions. In one age she is the fair and beautiful Helen; in another the mild and gentle Esther. As either, she has exerted an influence for good or evil on the records of men and states in every clime.

From the time of Homer, poets have delighted in portraying the different sides of her character. Our own immortal Shakespeare was so skilled in this art that Ruskin has exclaimed, "Shakespeare has no heroes, he has only heroines."

In his Portia, his Rosalind, his Lady Macbeth, his Ophelia, his Juliet, he has pictured the sex in an inimitable style. Perhaps of his numerous characters, none is so interesting, yet at the same time so repellent as is that of Lady Macbeth. In it we see reflected the mind of a woman, whose womanly feelings are so obscured by her unscrupulous, ambitious nature as to render her an object of horror rather than of pity. She exerts the subtle power a woman has over the man that loves her, to induce her husband to commit the most horrible of crimes. Where we would expect her to act as a check, a restraint, on him, we find her instead prompting, encouraging, and almost forcing him into evil acts.

Before describing how Lady Macbeth brought about the murder of Duncan let us first recall the manner of man her husband was. Macbeth was one of the noblest men and bravest warriors in Scotland, esteemed and honored by the King, admired and respected by his equals, and generally regarded as the successor to the throne on Duncan's death, an event that in the or-