

MRS. MACGROOTHER ON WOMAN'S RIGHTS.

"What do I think of Woman's Rights and the despotism of man? Indeed, neighbour, I think woman always has had plenty of rights when she had the sense to use them, and as for man's despotism, I never came across much of it in my day. This Mr. Stuart Mill"—

"Ah!" we interrupted, "now you see the application of our remark the other day. "Mister" is all right for him; he is not a great man like DIOGENES."

"He talks a terrible deal of nonsense, like you, for all that; but this book of his, in my judgment, is the direst stuff I ever read. Sandy and I read the most of it by spells, time about. He is as husky as an auctioneer ever since, and I am pretty hoarse myself, but we both slept sound after the exertion. There is nothing so good for sleep as a dry book; it wearsies both soul and body, and sends you to bed without a single idea to distract your attention from the business of rest."

"So the ladies in general," we asked, "thus judge of Mr. Mill's efforts on their behalf?"

"Ladies in general," said Mrs. Macgroother, "never read such books. The young ones have bonnets, and "bends," and beaux, and balls to think of; the old ones have their bairns, born,—or to be born,—their servants and their marketings, their houses and their husbands to look after; and, if any time remains on hand, they read something that they know nothing about. They are not such fools as to read what they all know better than any *he* that ever was."

"That," said DIOGENES, "is not encouraging for the writers who work on behalf of the fair sex."

"If a man," was the reply, "writes a book for women to read, let it be on some subject that he understands, or has seen, or let it be a good novel; but when he writes about women, he may be sure they will not read his lucubrations. The men will, though, and much good it does them. Buffon wrote a capital book about birds and beasts; but I suppose ye never heard of an elephant reading it? Besides, it is an old, old story, and I never saw anything worth remembering that had been written on the subject."

"Not what the Apostle of the Gentiles wrote?"

"St. Paul certainly wrote about us, but he tells us that it was his own ideas only; in fact, he felt that inspiration left him whenever he got among the lassies. You men are always flinging him in our teeth, but you forget the conclusion, which is, in my opinion, a kind of apology for what he had said. He was soon left to himself when he meddled with us. Do you think he was a married man?"

"We never heard of his wife," we replied.

"That's nothing," said our gossip; "few men speak much of their wives, but it's my opinion that he was married, and that his wife came in with the 'creepie' and made him make the explanation he did,—that all about women was out of his own head!"

"We never thought of that argument," we replied, "but now that you mention it, perhaps his wife might have been the thorn in the flesh that so tormented him."

"No doubt, no doubt," said she; "it's just the way ye all speak behind our backs, but, as I was saying, there is nothing new in this talk about Woman's Rights. There is an old song, written by our jolly King James, it is said, about this very dispute, in which the old farmer yields the plough to the wife, and he agrees to take the house work week-about with her. I wish, dear old DIOGENES, that I could find the song; but the gist of it is, that the wife ran the plough-point up against a stone, which sent her flying out the stüits; that the nigh horse would get over the traces, and that the off one would neither 'hup' nor 'gee.' Long before breakfast time she unyoked and came home; but, ere she had the horses in the stable, she heard a row in the byre, and, on looking in to

see what the matter was, she found that the gudeman had forgotten to tie the kicking cow, in consequence of which she had sent him, with his milk-pail, head-first into the gutter, where his wife found him covered with black muck and white milk, 'a pretty sight,' as the song has it, 'for the bairnies and me.' In the house, things were no better. The beds were just as she had left them; he had burned her broon sweeping in the fire-place; the porridge was scorched to the bottom of the pot, and smelt like a singed sheep's-head; one of the children had tumbled into the meal girdel; the youngest was lying in its cradle, squalling like mad. The moral was, 'the wife to the coo and the man to the pleugh;' and, in spite of Mr. Mill and all the Bloomers in Yankeedom, the world will never make a better arrangement."

"Not forgetting the 'creepie,'" we supposed.

"Oh, I am not wedded to the stool," said Mrs. Macgroother. "The beetle,—the potato beetle,—will do good service. Did ye never hear of Tommy Wauchup's wife and the minister at Cartdyke?"

We confessed our ignorance.

"I must tell you that story before I go—it's a true one too, as the gentleman who does the puns for the *Herald* will certify, for he knows all about Cartdyke, and will, perhaps, tell you how to spell the word."

"Tommy Wauchup's wife was a good woman as ever looked after a 'thrawn gudeman.' And he was very fond of bowls in Summer time, and curling in Winter. What his wife objected to was, that he never came home on the playing days till dusk, and always more or less under the influence of 'refreshments.' On these occasions, whenever she heard the returning steps of the truant, she had the beetle ready for him, and admonished him, as she called it. Tommy, to escape these practical proofs of her care for him, sometimes brought a friend home, calculating that, as her admonitions were only for his private use, she would hide the beetle in presence of a third party; and so she did. One night, after a pleasant evening and 'refreshing,' Tommy prevailed upon the Reverend Parish Minister,—a good bowler and curler too,—to go home and take a cup of tea with Mrs. Wauchup. The Minister was troubled with a corn, and wore list slippers, in consequence of which the wrathful wife, who, as usual, was waiting, beetle in hand, heard only the not over steady steps of Tommy. The door was opened, and, as a matter of course, the host politely showed the guest in first, upon whose head down came the beetle, and on the pavement down came the unlucky victim of the lady's displeasure!

"Bless me, Janet!" exclaimed the horrified husband, "ye've felled the Minister of Cartdyke."

"Oh! that's a pity," said she, coming forth with a candle, "but really, Tommy, I thought it was yersel."

"Physical force then is your favorite method of enforcing your authority, and resisting man's despotism?"

"Oh no!" was the answer of Mrs. Macgroother, while fixing her shawl preparatory to leaving us. "Oh dear, no! as well say that the gallows were the only means of preserving the public peace. Our husbands soon learn to yield to gentle and constant persuasion, knowing, of course, that the "creepie" is quite at hand;—it is, in fact, our *ultima ratio* only."

MIRABILE DICTU!

Our Local Fountains of Justice threatens to be frozen up.—*Daily News*.

What a shame! To freeze up in such bad English, too! Who are they? DIOGENES has not the pleasure of knowing any of them; but if friends of the *News*, he pities them, of course. The Cynic would advise them at once to apply to the Water Committee, and put a mustard plaister on, in the meantime.