

Women and Men.

ANNA D. BRADLEY.

So much is being said to day about the "rights" of women and the "tyranny" of man, and the subject has assumed such magnitude, that this feminine scribe feels herself called and sent to come to the front, and to gravely and impartially discuss the pros and cons.

And pray, who has a better right to speak with authority than this self same female scribe? My duties introduce me into many homes where I meet the tyrant man and the defrauded woman, and clustering about them and looking with equal reverence upon both, I always find the happy boys and girls who will, in a few brief years, become the men and women of the day.

Now, strange to say, these girls have never dreamed that papa is such a tyrannical monster, and the boys—God bless them every one—have never for a moment imagined that aught is being withheld from their mother that prevents her from being, in the highest sense, their father's equal. They never even dream that she is not his equal.

Now this especial scribe is a strong advocate for, and a firm believer, in the rights of both men and women. I firmly believe that I have the right—please remember it is rights of which we are speaking—to plow. But then I seriously doubt the expediency of such a thing. I never tried, but really I do not believe that I could plow as well as the average man. Men are stronger and—for some reason, I don't know why—are by nature better adapted to this work than are women. But then by patient continuance in plowing, I doubt not that in a few generations we could plow quite as well as the men.

If we found that our feminine draperies were in our way—and I fear they would be—we would have the right to doff our skirts and don bloomers. True, they would not be so becoming, nor near so graceful, but remember it is rights we are discussing, and man would be a tyrant indeed if he presumed to assert authority over the style of woman's dress.

But as I drop in among the pleasant homes and take a seat amid the cheery circles, I cannot help but believe that the present order of things is infinitely preferable. Somebody must brush up the hearth, and somebody must do the plowing. (Here let it be understood that the fireside and the plow represent the two distinct classes of labor.)

The mother's hands are gentler and softer than the father's, and they appear to be better adapted to curling baby's hair, to binding up little cut fingers and poor stumped toes, and to making and dressing rag dolls.

Again, women's feet are smaller and their step is softer than the man's, and it is pleasanter to have them in the sick room than to nervously shudder at the heavy foot-fall of a No. 10 boot.

"God created them male and female." Not one above the other; not one more important than the other, yet still emphatically "male and female." And, somehow, I fancy that God designed that each should have their duties; that each should be awake to the responsibilities of those duties, but that those duties—while there would be many in common—would yet often be entirely distinct.

If God had so formed my fingers that they could the better grasp the plow, and my brothers' that that they could the more readily handle the broom or needle, then who would dare assert that God did not intend for the plow to be held in as honorable esteem as the needle or the broom.

I may be wrong—I so often am—but I verily believe that women already have the loftiest position the world can give, when we are the keepers of the hearts and homes.

I cannot believe that the woman's influence would be one whit greater for good if her voice should grow loud and hoarse while addressing the multitude. I firmly believe that, if she wishes to do this, and can secure the hall and audience, it is her perfect right. Only I seriously question the wisdom of the experiment.

The home and the babies must be cared for, and the poor men have such big and clumsy hands, and their minds are so blank. I cannot believe, try as I may, that the home grows better or purer because of the absence of the wife and mother. If it could be proved that it did, then—despite any present inconvenience—I would earnestly plead for her immediate entrance upon public duties. If woman's voice grew sweeter, or her heart more Christ-like by her presence upon the platform, then would I pray God speed the day when ample room would be made for her. If the "higher development" of women demand that she become public property, then in God's name I plead that she become such.

But a something within me, to which I can give no name, cries out against all of this. I cannot help but believe that the woman who is the cherished wife and mother, the woman who is "Queen of the beautiful realm called Home," the woman who is trusted by her husband and revered by her children, is, already, so richly blessed by heaven that she would not exchange her position for the broadest platform or the loftiest pulpit that was ever built for man.

The woman who has the right to dwell apart from the jostling world is the woman who is favored by God. The woman who faithfully tends her own little flock and leads them, without the loss of one, into the safe, sure fold of the Heavenly Shepherd, is the woman who is called upon to live a very busy, active life indeed; but then she is so blessed!

"Some women have no children," did I hear you say? Yes, I know. And I can't help but feel that the woman has missed something very precious, as well as escaped a very solemn responsibility, who has never felt upon her bosom the pressure of a baby-face, or thrilled beneath the clasp of tender, baby fingers.

I believe that these childless women not only have the right, but that it is their duty to work anywhere and everywhere that they can find work for the Master to be done. Their work cannot be so precious or so delightful to themselves as is the work of the mother in her own God-given home and about her own God-given loved ones. Yet it is brave, true, honest work, done in her Master's name; and who shall dare to say that the blessing of God does not rest bountifully upon it?

So long as such consecrated women as Frances E. Willard and the Lady Somerset will stand upon the platform, and can accomplish such work as they, and many like them, are accomplishing for humanity, I would rather never use my feeble tongue or pen again than to use it once in unkind criticism.

God bless these noble women! Aye, God is richly blessing them, and they will have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of heaven. God gave into their hands a work, and they are doing it grandly, nobly. But God has also given to the wives and mothers a work equally as important, even if less conspicuous, and He has added to them the higher privilege of doing their work within their own sacred walls.

Our brothers have their work to do, yet it is not one whit more needful nor more arduous than is ours. It requires as much wisdom and as true a hand and eye to guide aright a young immortal soul, as it can ever require to guide a plow.

A long time ago I conceived the idea—and I have never felt called upon to part with the conviction—that men were not women and that women were not men. I believe strongly in the eternal fitness of things.

In a tall tree, just outside my window, a mocking bird has built her nest. Way out on the top-most branch the father bird sits and sings in rich, sweet tones that attract the attention of the passers-by. Yes, everybody notices the gifted, beautiful singer. He sings to the world, and the enraptured world pays to the bird its homage and admiration. Within the tiny nest—away back mid the leafy branches—the mother bird sits and sings to her nestlings: sings a low, murmuring little lullaby as she hushes them to sleep; or, if they are hungry, lovingly drops the carefully selected food into their little open mouths. No one notices the mother bird's song or work. In truth, passers-by do not even know that she or her nestlings are there. Yet still she is there, and the tiny birdlings nestle under her wing and listen to the song, which is very sweet to them, or look to her for food and protection, while all the time the father bird is charming the world with his music.

I wonder who taught the father bird to sing to the world, and the mother bird to sing to her nestlings?

Perhaps I am wrong, yet I cannot help but believe that to the listening ear of God the tender murmur of this mother bird is quite as precious and as worthy of note as is the glorious singing of the gifted father. Each bird is endowed with a power peculiarly their own. Each obeys their God-given instincts; so—

"He sings to the wide world,
And she to her nest.
In the nicest of nature
Which song is the best?"

In our happy country, where we know nothing of an established church, we have little idea of the annoyance and oppression it may show towards Dissenters. In view of the disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales a land commission has been taking evidence in Cardiganshire, and some very strange things have been brought to light. Reference was made to a conclave of landlords, agents and parsons held in a town in that shire, at which it was agreed that all tenants who voted for a Liberal candidate in that year should be evicted that all who remained at home on the day of the election should have their rents raised; that where possible no farm should be let to Nonconformists; and that, in order to extirpate Nonconformity, new churches should be built all over the country. This spirit and the conduct which results from it have been actively at work during the last twenty-five years. A certain estate was referred to where twenty-five years ago there were twenty Nonconformists, but now there are only eight, the others having been turned out to make room for those who promised to leave the chapel for the church. One landlady of eighty, prompted, it is said, by a priest, sent a long circular letter to all her tenants, saying that from conscientious motives she gave them the alternative of attending church with their families or of quitting their farms.—Canada Presbyterian.

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The Independent, though a pedobaptist, thus fights for us a battle we are bound to win: "Dr. John A. Broadus is, we suppose, the leading man in the Southern Baptist Church, and he has lately written a letter, published in the *Western Recorder*, of Louisville, in which he expresses a decided opinion that 'it is highly undesirable that persons previously immersed by Baptists or Campbellites should be received as they stand into a Baptist church, and that they ought to be baptized when received, for the sake of good order and to prevent any troublesome questions from afterward arising.' He knows that in a large portion of our country they are not so baptized, and if a church should decide to receive them without baptizing he would make no further trouble. It cannot be denied that those who have been immersed in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost have received Christian baptism, and to require such people to be reimmersed is without a particle of authority in scripture. No verse can be quoted to support it. When one asserts that only immersion by an immersed person and the succession reaching the apostolic times is 'valid baptism,' Dr. Vedder's remark may be quoted, that the word 'valid' is 'pickled with popery'—*Guide*.

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