

## MRS. MCGROOTHER ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

"We have been reflecting, seriously, upon your ideas of domestic government, Mrs. McGroother, and we think that your system would reduce man to a creature living entirely under the 'fear of God and the Broomstick!'"

"And what else would you have? The first takes away all need for the second—if any man ever could be found fully acting under that motion, he might safely be trusted with the key of the street door for me; but seeing that the world is what it is, every man needs the Broomstick—that is, a little looking after, by what Carlisle is so fond of,—'the constable.'" If he is a quiet respectable man like my Sandy, for instance, the constable is represented by the wife with her 'creepie' and, may be, a curtain lecture, if he is a rowdy, or worse. Then you have the policeman with his baton, the Recorder's Court, a moral discourse from the bench, rubbed in with the eternal five shillings fine. Now which would you like—the 'creepie' or the baton? quiet and affectionate correction at home, or public punishment, accompanied with a running comment of the deadly-funny reporters? But Heaven help us, Madam! Is there no half-way house?—no medium? Can a man not live free of both? We mean a married man of course, for, being ourselves single, we are exempt from the female instrument of reproof."

"And much good that does you! If you had had a wife, do you think she would have let you make a Judy of yourself before the Recorder the other day for eating oysters in company with all the vagabonds of the city? No, no, my firm opinion is, as Milwood's housekeeper in *Old Mortality* says, that a man 'must either marry or do waur,' and if he marries, he either must, or should, be guided by his wife."

"But," we persisted, "even Stuart Mill and the Women's Rights' ladies, only ask equality with men."

"Equality!" cried Mrs. McGroother, with contempt. "Where Mr. Philosopher, with all your experience, did you ever see equality? You have been looking all your days, with a lighted lantern for an honest man—and doubtless you must have found many things you were not looking for, but did you ever find equality? One must rule and the other obey—let the husband work and rule out of doors, but the woman, if she be good for anything, must rule at home. But I am not unreasonable. Let men be men on 'Change, in the Army, the Navy, and in all that concerns public affairs: I neither would 'mak' nor meddle' with them in these, but in all that concerns home, the wife must be ruler. A pretty kettle of fish I would make were I to try my hand at making a rise out of the Banks, by putting my name on Jack Robinson's note to please the Directors of the Great Shav'em Joint Stock concern, and getting his name on my note to get it discounted by the Flee'cm Bank at the corner. I would either blush like a lobster or laugh outright at men's folly. Or how could Sandy have managed with the bairns? Then, if there was to be equality in one thing, needs must in all. If the wife is to have the children, would ye have her nurse them too? Or would they take it time about? There is an old joke about that. The woman, it was agreed, should have the first child, the man the second, and so on. The first baby was born; the man took his turn; then the woman had her second in-nings, but the man, when it came to him again, 'cried off,' and would have no more. The world has been regulated by greater wisdom than any that the Women's Rights' society can bring to bear upon the question, and while the wife rules at home all will go smoothly, but to be ruled in her own house is not to be thought of."

DIOGENES is quite unconvinced, but Mrs. McGroother is fluent and quite self-satisfied with her reasoning,—nevertheless, he ventured to argue that man made all sacrifices for the wife; worked, and thought, and denied himself in every

way for her comfort, and, as head, ought to "rule his own household."

"You are at your quotations from St. Paul again," said our antagonist, "but let it pass, and tell me what the sacrifices are that a man makes for his wife that he does not make for himself or his horse? Of course he must work to feed himself, and he must have somebody to see that he is fed or he could not work at all. If he has no wife he must have a house-keeper, with her followers, who will eat him out of house and home, without any thanks. Even in a mere point of economy, a wife is the cheapest servant a man can keep."

"Servant!" we broke in. "A servant waiting behind the door with a beetle in her hand to break her master's head. Rum idea of a servant that, gentle lady!"

"Well, well, it is not every husband that needs the beetle! and it is not every wife that can use it,—but the plain fact is, that by a kind and sagacious wife, or a cunning jade of a servant, every man who keeps a roof over his head, must be ruled—or guided—or cheated. Sacrifice! It is the wife that, makes the sacrifice; from the day she marries her husband till the day she pays for his headstone, her whole life is a sacrifice. She gets up in the morning to see that the fire is made, the toast buttered, the coffee clear, his hat brushed, himself tidy, the children dressed, the crying ones skelped, the boys sent off to school, the girls at their practising; off to market to bargain for mutton and beef and fish, back to order the dinner, to scold the cook, to look after the chambermaid and the baker lads, to be smart and ready when the goodman comes home, to bear his ill-humour if the beef is over-done, to coax him to be amiable when she gives him cold mutton or hash—to eat both as if she liked them any more than he did,—for one cannot always have a hot dinner, and the sluts in the kitchen, they won't eat cold meat!—Then there is 'to tea' and an evening of darning, (for the boys always come home with 'potatoes' in the heels of their stockings;) then she has to send all off whimpering to bed, to see the fires out and the doors locked, and lastly, after she gets to bed to tell of the bills to pay: butcher's, baker's, tax-gatherer's, grocer's, doctor's, parson's, tailors, dressmaker's and shoemaker's;—poor body! she at last falls asleep leaving her husband growling, as tho' the bairns and their bills were all hers! Lucky if she gets a night's rest after all, for ten to one but she is wakened by a smell of smoke to be looked after, or a shutter banging off its hinges which he never hears, or baby tumbles out of bed with a dump on the floor and wakes all the house, except nurse, with its squalling! Sacrifices! the wife's life is all sacrifices; and unless she rules, how can she live? Then, in misfortune, she is still worse off, for then, as is well known she can do, and does, anything. You remember, yourself, a thousand cases where the poor wife has died under her labour of love and patience, weeping and working all day that she might look cheery to her desponding husband at; night wearing herself out like an old hone to sharpen him up. Well may he bear a bit claw with the 'creepie' when he rebels against her loving rule! You have heard how a whole town-full of wives behaved to their husbands when the enemy compelled them to surrender? It is an old-world story, but women are always the same. Well, the commander of the conquerors, as a proof of humanity, proclaimed, that all the women might go free with as much of their property as they could carry on their shoulders, and out they all marched, each with her husband on her back! Tell me, old friend, what would you, or any man have done had you been in the place of the women?"

She was out of breath and gave us a chance to reply. We paused, and reflected, and thinking of all the care that is expended on married men,—the entire loss of liberty entailed on poor Mr. McGroother,—his early breaking in under the 'creepie,' we put ourselves in his place, and, groaning, replied,