

Oh! friend when midnight blights the noon,
 When gladdest cheeks grow wet with tears,
 When winter slays the joy of June,
 To such fair faith thy heart attune,
 Thine eyes shall greet the golden years.

HANC.

Newton Centre, Spring of '81.

HAS WOMAN HER RIGHTS?

It is foreign to our purpose to institute in this short article, an enquiry into the physical or intellectual capacities of the two sexes; much less to provoke controversy as regards the political or social relations of woman. Some people have never ceased to declaim upon the wrongs of woman—her natural equality—her political non-existence and her degrading servitude; as if at some times her sex had been conquered by man, and had ever since been under the most cruel and tyrannical subjection. Disquietudes, deep and distressing, are thus created, where peace and confidence ought to prevail; and we are made to overlook what in every great reform, is all important—the exact thing to be reformed.

We shall, perhaps, better understand the nature of the subject in hand, if we, for a moment digress and take a hasty view of the condition of woman in ancient times.

Among the Greeks, her position was anything but favorable. She could not act at all without the intervention of a guardian. She could not give testimony in any trial. She was literally "given away" in marriage; and to her husband belonged the power to dispose of her as he deemed best.

And if in the country of Demosthenes and Solon the condition of woman was such, we shall look in vain for any juster estimate of her rights in that of Cicero and Gaius. The whole fabric of Roman law, as regards females, was based upon the idea of their intellectual and physical imbecility; and if possible, they extended to her a lower respect even than that she commanded in Greece.

Thus we find in all the most enlightened countries of ancient times, the condition of woman was a degraded one; and we shall, perhaps, with no little interest, seek the cause of her advanced position in the present era. This cause we unhesitatingly aver to be the influence of Christianity. And it is not a little remarkable, that wherever the influence of Christianity has been felt, there woman has been raised to her true and lawful position, and has been

made neither the mistress nor the servant of man, but his true and only partner in the social state.

Having thus at some length premised, we wish now to point out that the advantages and legal rights enjoyed by woman in this country, are, if not superior, at any rate equal to those enjoyed by man, and that by her present agitation, she is nursing a phantom which no system of law or justice allows, and which, when it seems almost within her grasp, will, by the iron will of society and custom, be driven to a still greater length.

And just here we wish to urge that in order that her rights should be *equal*, it is not necessary that they should be *identical*. Surely she may have equal rights, and at the same time exercise them in different spheres. We shall not attempt to argue with those who claim that woman is wronged unless she is allowed to share in all occupations of men. We admit she is intellectually capable. But we would ask, is there no difference in the circumstances of the sexes? Is there no fitness in assigning some duties to one sex and some to another.

All the political rights enjoyed by man, with the exception of electing and being elected to office, are likewise the property of woman. As regards the latter, it has been decided by custom. If she were eligible to one political office, it would be because her sex does not unfit her for any; and the same code that admitted female legislators, ought, for the same reason, to admit them as sheriffs or captains of militia. The very constitution of society has of necessity allotted these employments to man.

But it may be asked, what reason is there for excluding her from casting her vote in the election of public officers? In every free, elective government, *parties* will exist amid the storms which beat without in the political world, the domestic hearth is yet the sanctuary of repose, the domestic altar still receives the offering of united hearts to the God of peace and love.

Woman at the present time is admitted to the same privileges in regard to education as those enjoyed by man. She may become a public lecturer, may practice medicine, may enter the pulpit or join in the earnest discussions of the bar;—in short the law of the land lays at her feet everything that is in any sense suitable to her sex.

Both branches of the human family are recognized not as unequals, but as equals; not as antagonists, but as friends; and in no case are any exclusive privileges granted to man except where