

Thoughtless, passionate, a creature of impulses for good or evil, she may, according to circumstances, be

"Uncertain, coy and hard to please,"

or, after her fashion a "ministering angel," but she can never rise to the ideal of the

"Perfect woman nobly planned
To warn, to comfort and command."

In ordinary circumstances she may be a useful household worker. If emancipated from this, she may spread her butterfly wings in thoughtless frivolity; but she treats the higher interests and efforts of humanity with stolid unconcern and insipid levity, or interferes in them with a capricious and clamorous tyranny. In what she does and in what she leaves undone she is equally a drag on the progress of what is good and noble, and the ally and promoter of what is empty, useless and wasteful. If the stoics anticipated a perpetual succession of such women they might well be hopeless of the destinies of mankind, unless they could find in their philosophy a remedy for the evil.

But the stoics wanted that higher light as to the position and destiny of woman which the Gospel has given to us; and it is a relief to turn from their notions to the higher testimony of the Word of God. The Bible has some solution for all the difficult problems of human nature, and it has its own theory on the subject of woman's relations to man.

In the old record in Genesis, Adam, the earth-born, finds no helpmeet for him among the creatures sprung, like himself, from the ground; but he is given that equal helper in the woman made from himself. In this new relation he assumes a new name. He is no longer *Adam*, the earthy, but *Ish*, lord of creation, and his wife is *Isha*—he the king and she the queen of the world. Thus in Eden there was a perfect unity and equality of man and woman, as both Moses and our Saviour, in commenting on this passage indicate, though Milton, usually so correct as an interpreter of Genesis, seems partially to overlook this. But a day came when *Isha*, in the exercise of her independent judgment, was tempted to sin, and tempted her husband in turn. Then comes a new dispensation of labour and sorrow and subjection, the fruit, not of God's original arrangements, but of man's fall. Simple as a nursery tale, profounder than any philosophy, this is the Bible theory of the subjection of woman, and of that long series of wrong and suffering and self-abnegation which has fallen to her lot as the partner of man in the struggle for existence in a sin-cursed world. But even here there is a gleam of light. The Seed of the woman is to bruise the head of the serpent, and *Isha* receives a new name, *Eve*—the mother of life. For in her, in every generation, from that of Eve to that of Mary of Bethlehem, resided the glorious possibility of bringing forth the Deliverer from the evils of the fall. This great prophetic destiny