

CHAPTER II.

THE ORIGIN OF FALSE IDEALS REGARDING WOMEN.

"In the progress of civilization, woman suffrage is sure to come."—*Charles Sumner*.

"Under whatever conditions, and within whatever limits, men are admitted to the suffrage, there is not a shadow of justification for not admitting women under the same."—*John Stuart Mill*.

THE false ideals of the savage nations and of Eastern countries before the time of Christ have not yet been thoroughly uprooted. In variously modified forms they have become interwoven with the mental and moral natures of men, and women too, by the influence of the customs and habits of succeeding generations through many centuries. The ideals that men should capture their wives by force; that wives are the property of their husbands; that wives should be shut up in harems; that women should work only in the home; that women have to be protected by men, and that women should be subordinate to men, are all degrading to true womanhood and manhood. They had their origin in barbarism or Orientalism. They can be traced to the time when physical force was the supreme test of justice. Man had physical superiority, and in his savage condition brute force was the highest arbiter. Being the stronger physically, man assumed the right to make laws when social or national organizations were formed; and the customs of successive ages have become fixed in the consciousness of both men and women. Man assumed superiority, and woman accepted subordination, as natural and proper conditions.

In pagan lands woman was a mere slave, and the growth towards freedom for woman has, until recently, been remarkably slow. The Brahmins taught that "A girl, a maiden, a wife, shall never do anything in accordance with her own will, not even in her own house." "A woman shall serve her hus-