

AN

# ORATION

DELIVERED

ON THE FOURTH DAY OF JULY 1800.

By a Citizen of the United States.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE

## FEMALE ADVOCATE.

Written by a Lady.

*Edward may win our towns, but Philippe conquers hearts.*  
Siege of Calais.

SPRINGFIELD:  
PRINTED BY HENRY BREWER.

.....  
1808.

best copy  
available

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AN ORATION, &c.

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**W**HEN great convulsions agitate a portion of the earth, the immediate neighbourhood partakes of the shock ; and all actual spectators of the event imagine it will never be forgotten ; but unless some permanent effects are produced, not only will the affair make a slight impression at a distance, but in a few fleeting years the youth will sport with unconcern, on the identical spot where the earth swallowed the cottage of his ancestors.

Similar causes produce similar effects in the political, as well as in the natural world. In all ages of mankind governors have tyrannised, the governed have revolted, torrents of blood have flowed, and tyranny has often been compelled to change its form, while its essence has remained the same, and its power unabated.

Revolutions of government during the infancy of the world, appear to have answered no end but to stain the page of history with blood. It behoves us as rational creatures, to be satisfied that the revolution we this day celebrate, is calculated to be more interesting, more profitable to the human race. Do we celebrate this festive anniversary, because during eight years of war, and animosity, two hundred thousand of our fellow men shed their blood to decide a question of mere national independence ? If these are our inducements to joy we had better arrest our proceedings and turn the house of feasting to a house of mourning.

To acquire a name and rank among the nations of the earth, are fine words, well adapted to inflate the vanity of a national partizan ; but apart from the effects of government, will not be put in competition with human blood by those who are " friends to every clime, and patriots of the world."

**CITIZENS.**—To the principles, the genuine, univer-

sal principles of declaration of independence, we consecrate this day. Our festivity is not on account of the achievements of armies, not merely because the seat of government is removed from London to Philadelphia ; but because the American people have calmly, and deliberately declared, that "all men are created EQUAL"—and in the presence of the supreme God have, in support of this declaration, "pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their "sacred honour."

Enough of praise, enough of censure has been alternately bestowed on the actors of the scene—let us withdraw from men and adhere to principles, for principles are permanent, but every day's experience, may convince us of the mutability of men. Indeed, this mutability is, in its effects so baneful to improvement, that were it not counteracted by a force more powerful than itself, science, virtue, and freedom would recoil with a power equal to their impulse. This counteracting power, which will secure mankind from any dangerous retrograde, is the art of printing.

To this declaration, diffused by this art, will probably be owing all that is dear, and interesting to this country and mankind. This declaration independent of the success which crowned it, is an arcana for all political evil. A successful resolution, without some such declaration, would probably have presented us with no better spectacle than

*"Clamorous chiefs around the throne"*

*"Destroying regal power to raise their own."*

But whatever may be the future fate of America, she has destroyed the Bastile—she has liberated Belgium—her principles have scaled the Alps, and inundated the plains of Italy—they have climbed the walls of Rome, and burst the gates of the Conclave—they have summoned the soul of Brutus from the dust, to rid the earth like Hercules, from monsters.—E'er long Ireland shall take her harp from off the willows, and shake the air with notes of liberty. Greece shall wake from her long slumber, some new Demosthenes shall plead the Rights of man, while new Homers sing the triumphs of the free. Egypt the mother of arts shall raise her lowly voice, and demand from humanity the restoration of her Alexandria. Alexandria shall again flourish, not in a precarious collection of perishable manuscripts, but in the principles of our declaration of independence, indelibly engraven on the hearts, of its inhabitants. Children of the Sun! Cease to bewail your Monte zuma

and Atabalippa—the declaration of independence is already on its road to you—the proud Castilian tide still flows in the veins of your haughty conquerors—impatient of controul, as fond of power they see with pain and grudging, all offices, all emoluments, transferred alike from native pride, and native merit, to be heaped on the outcasts of Europe. The Spanish monarchy totters at its base, exhausted by frequent wars, impoverished by a profligate administration, farther degrees of colonial oppression will be the nostrum which state quacks will not fail to administer. Then will the inward burnings of colonial rage burst into a flame,—then will the Rights of Man echo from Florida to Chili, and re-echo from Lima to St. Salvador. The principles of freedom will then be learned from those who now wield the scourge of slavery—the benevolent system of Jesus, shall resound from the ruins of the Hall of the Inquisition—Eternal infamy shall blast the murderous Cortez—and the spirits of Almagro and Pizarro curse the earth no more.

And thou, sable Ethiop! Suffering brother, let the principles of this day irradiate thy benighted countenance! Already has the voice of thy tears and blood reached heaven! Guadaloupe and St. Domingo have seen thy race revenged, and their chains broken on the tyrants heads. **YET O!** our brother, curse us not—some of us have principles of justice and bowels of compassion—we will raise thee to freedom, if we do not restore thee to thy long lost Africa!

Citizens, my soul shrinks from herself, and startles at the name of Africa! Africa! Where we have heaped crime on crime! Where we have excited murders, robberies, and burnings, that we might punish them in our own land with endless, hopeless slavery, on the victims of our subtilty and their innocent posterity.—Declaration of Independence! Where art thou now? Dost thou shun thy own light, or dost thou retire to weep, while thy votaries

*“ Drive on their sordid traffics, gauge and span  
And buy the muscles and the bones of man;  
Deal in the blood of innocence, and plead  
Expedience as a warrant for the deed.”*

And thou religion! How art thou employed? Art thou forging creeds and systems to enslave the mind, when thou shouldst be loosing the chains that enslave the body? Shame on thee! “ Arise, shine, thy light is come. Preach deliverance to the captive, break every yoke,” explain the nature of “ the fast which the Lord has chosen;” and command men that they “ let the oppressed go free.”

It is pleasing to turn from the contemplation of our inconsistencies, to the purity of our principles. The basis of the declaration, from which the friend of his species hopes so much is the **EQUALITY OF MAN**. How the idea first got abroad, that men were not equal, is difficult to conceive ; unless we refer the claim to the arrogance of power in the dark ages of the world. As in the course of events laws gave stability to property, and property was so often bartered for power as to be confounded with it, superiority and inferiority became synonymous with riches and poverty—but now that philosophy has dispelled the gloom of ignorance, men know that wealth may be acquired without virtue, and without talents ; and lost without a crime. And however imbecility, or dotage may dream about some being “ well-born,” and others ill born ; yet the **EQUALITY OF MAN**, is the bond of our union, and the constituted law of the land.

We learn also from the declaration of independence, that public utility is the end of government. If so, there needed no apology for the extinction of monarchy ; a form of government founded in force, incompetent, expensive, and self evidently ridiculous ; always dangerous, but particularly so when vested in an unreasonable and tyrannical monarch, such as *two nations* have described the obstinate vindictive George.

Not only do the transactions we celebrate declare that public utility is the end of government, but that the people is the sovereign—that it is the people that breathes into the essence of government the breath of life, and to its forms “ a local habitation and a name :” and that it may rightfully destroy its own creature. And more—that circumstances may make the exercise of this right one of its most sacred duties ; whenever *any form* of government, however plausible its theory, however legitimate its origin, either from its inherent defects, or a change in the circumstances of the people to be governed, becomes inadequate to the accomplishment of its original purposes.

Now the existence of this right includes in it the liberty of using our tongues and presses as we please, both as to forms of government, and as to the actions and motives of its agents. And this liberty we possess, and have exercised from the first dawn of the Revolution, and in its most turbid moments. Revert to the consequence of the battle of Monmouth, wherein two conflicting parties each advocated with great acrimony the causes of their favorite com-

mander. And though many unjust aspersions were cast on the character of Gen. Washington both verbally and from the press, yet freedom of communication was then esteemed so much a part of general liberty, that no person ever thought of appealing to any other tribunal in such cases.

Indeed, could we suppose for a moment, the existence of laws restraining the liberty of speech under severe penalties, they must of themselves be nugatory. The people are accustomed to speak, and to hear others speak with temper—they are not an irritable people—they *have* their faults, but a disposition to ruin a family for a word is not one. They are besides, so linked in with each other by marriages, and family connections, that their opinions will make way, from house to house, from soul to soul, and however they may be stilled, can never be extinguished. The genius of the people, is unfavourable to the system of *spies* and *informers*—they are inquisitive—they soon know the history of every body—no monster thirsting for *finis* and *quiram* prosecutions, no professional *word catcher*, could long lurk unseen among them. But should any whose *old habits*, sordid mind, and inflammable spirits, mark them as formed for foul and bloody deeds, have obtained a permanent establishment in a neighborhood—the design of such, from the publicity of their characters, would unavoidable be impotent.

Indeed, so adverse from persecution is the soil of civilized man, that though England has been disgraced for the last three years by two of the most brutal statutes that ever stained the annals of legislation, entitled the Sedition Bill and the Alien Bill; one aiming to prevent Englishmen from discussing the principles of government, the other having for its object the banishment of all foreigners, who would not aid the government in propagating the doctrines and maxims of despotism; yet, though the following murmurings of popular discontent, have uninterruptedly and unceasingly disturbed the revellings of the courtiers, and planted thorns on the tyrant's pillow—though thousands of industrious Frenchmen gained a livelihood within a mile of the royal palace—though many needy wretches took up the trade of *spies*, and were supported by the example of many wealthier miscreants, the public and private pensioners of government—though servants were invited by the magistrates to betray their masters, and tavern keepers were commanded to betray their guests; yet this mountain

brought forth a mouse ! Some few French dancing masters and hair dressers, and livery servants were banished ; an eminent minister of the gospel was imprisoned for finding the Rights of Man in his bible—and some noble patriots were sent as slaves to the colony of New Holland.

The fury of government was exhausted on the printers—a set of men hated by tyrants above all others, because of all others they are to such most terrible. A single man of this class, may from an obscure garret, bombard a throne at any distance, he may work comparatively without noise, and in case of alarm, he may destroy the arrangements of his moveable types and the work he has produced, in less time than the myrmidons of tyranny can ascend his stairs. Notwithstanding therefore, many of this invaluable order of men suffered much, yet never did so many productions in favor of liberty, burst upon the world at once. Daniel Isaac Eaton assumed to himself the title of printer to the swinish multitude, a name conferred on the people by the apostate Burke, and in one two penny pamphlet published weekly, and read by thousands, he attempted to carry by storm the monarchy, aristocracy, and hierarchy of his country—he pressed into his service the keen edged wit of Voltaire, and Swift, and Murray ; the cautious elucidations of Montesquie, and Blackstone ; the deep researches of Puffendorf, of Harrington, and Price ; the iron argument of Milton, the confessions of the lords Lyttleton and Chesterfield, the plaintive melody of Goldsmith—the intrepidity of Pain and Thelwall—and the chaste discriminating eloquence of Barlow. He played off successfully Mr. Pitt out of office against Mr. Pitt in office. In short he well earned the reputation of despots and the approbation of mankind ; the history of these statutes has taught the world, that it is not in the power of any government to controul the freedom of the press, or the freedom of the tongue ; and that when the phrensy which excites nations to war subsides, governments of terror, will neither find spies to inform, or juries to convict.

One of the causes, which induced the American people to depose their tyrant, was his neglect of the duties of PUBLIC HOSPITALITY ; which was manifested by his obstructing the naturalization of foreigners. This (as he was then of sound mind) could only be for the purpose of preventing the population of the country, and thereby injuring the old inhabitants. And certainly, these measures were as well concerted, as the short sighted plots of



tyranny usually are. He knew that the English habits of the then colonists, contained something of liberty, and as his intention was to introduce Hanoverian despotism, he was well aware that foreigners escaping from its fangs among his American subjects, shewing them the scars of the whip, and the marks of the chain, and telling them dismal tales of excises, of stamps, of window taxes, and hearth taxes, and horse taxes, and cart taxes, and hat taxes, and pole taxes, and taxes on birth, and marriages, and funerals, and wills, and all the blessed consequences of **KINGS** and **WARS**; would make these Americans trembling alive, and unfit them even for that slow and cautious introduction of despotism, which a sagacious statesman will always prefer to military violence.

Well might the tyrant oppose the naturalization of foreigners, who like birds that have been entangled in a net, will shun the steps of the destroyer, and infuse the same shyness into all their associates. And well did the Americans to abolish a government which so artfully counteracted every cause, which prevented the assassination of their liberty. The people well knew, that except the Indians, the inhabitants of America were *all* foreigners; and as they sat around their cheerful fires, would smoke their pipes of peace and say:

“This comfortable hearth, this little farm has cost our father many hours of toil; these mountains, and these rocks, were his exchange for the fertile plains of Holland; oft’ would he talk of Holland! Its beauteous gardens, and its fine canals; its avenues of trees; then he would sigh and say, “but we have trees enough here!” then he would tell of our couzins, and our aunts—“me thinks I would feign see them”! he would say, and sigh again: and so on would he talk, till a tear would steal down his cheek; then he would shake his patient head and say, “O exile! even with freedom thou art ever sweet.”

*Another speaks.*—“My father was from France, a gay laborious man, he shed no tears but sung and talked of vines, but said as we could not get them, we must be content with cider—this is a good country my children,” he would say, this is a good country; here is no “Bastile, though here is stone enough to build one”; then he would shrug his shoulders, and exclaim, “Rochelle! Rochelle! thou art well named!”

*A third speaks.*—My father was from England, his face was variable as his native sky, sometimes he was grave, and

sometimes gay, often in a hurricane, and often in a calm ;  
 “ yet freedom was the polar star to which his soul was ever  
 “ true : England is a fine country, he would say, but then  
 “ the monarchy, and the prelacy : no good man could stay  
 “ there, since the Lord had taken the protector ; things had  
 “ been getting worse and worse since the Stewarts had got  
 “ back : there was no religious liberty, and he would free-  
 “ ly die for liberty.” And children he would say, “ pre-  
 “ serve your liberty : never part with liberty ; death or  
 “ liberty !” Thus would they sit and talk, until, their  
 souls like kindred drops, had mingled into one.

Well might public hospitality be expected from such a  
 people. They felt also that public hospitality was public  
 utility. The inhabitants of a *new* country, cannot possi-  
 bly derive such immediate profits from their land as those  
 of older districts : they have forests to clear, rocks to re-  
 move, roads to open, bridges to construct, court houses,  
 meeting and school houses to erect, and a hundred other  
 things to do, which the inhabitants of European countries  
 find done to their hands. Among the means of doing all  
 this, is seldom to be calculated a large hereditary capital,  
 which is only the result of the accumulated exertion of a-  
 ges ; and which, but for kings and wars, would have made  
 Europe richer than Peru. In spite of those moths of prop-  
 erty, and the rust of art, European capital far exceeds any  
 thing known in America ; and when a portion of this is  
 diffused among us by an emigrant, it cheers and assists us  
 in our labor, and we get a customer for some part of our  
 superfluous produce, whom we could not have had in the  
 regular course of trade.

We have besides a chance for getting a good neighbour,  
 and in our thinly peopled country, we have room enough  
 for them and for us. They divide with us our taxes, they  
 lighten our labor on the public roads, and if they increase  
 our stock of knowledge ; if we have learned the use of the  
 saw mill from the Hollenders ; if the Russians should far-  
 ther instruct us in its improvement, by the application of  
 the circular saw, without a retrograde motion. If the Po-  
 landers have taught us to make starch ; if the Germans  
 have taught us to refine sugar, to make stone ware and above  
 all, to reclaim our exhausted soil by the application of  
 Plaister of Paris ; if Italy has given us some idea of the nur-  
 ture of the silk-worm, and will farther teach us the culture  
 of the Olive and the Vine ; if China will bring its lathes,  
 and India its looms : if England has thrown away its phi-

losophic Priestly : and will throw its Arkwrights, its Brindleys, its Bakewells, its Boultons, its Wilkinsons, its Wedgewoods, its Whitebreads, its Walkers, and its Watts : must we partake of their blindness and trample under foot the pearls which they reject ? Forbid it patriotism ! Forbid it common sense ! let the men who have enlightened Europe, enlighten us ; and our sole return let us give them a full asylum ! Let them share with us, after a short probation, the rights of citizenships, the rights of suffrages : rights inestimable to them, "*and formidable to tyrants only.*"

**CITIZENS** .—You who love liberty, will love it *every where*—you would have it thaw the frozen souls of Greenlanders, and cheer the fainting Ethiop under the fervid rays of an ever vertical sun ; you would bid that sun in his course shine on freemen only. You must therefore, constantly have it in your eye : its name must forever vibrate from your tongue ; you must teach men their rights, even men the most ignorant and oppressed ; those who know their road, may animate and cheer each other, it is the bewildered traveller alone that needs guide.

You must teach your children the principles of this day, and by the best education in your power to bestow, teach them to understand them. You must plant, and water, and prune, and weed the infant mind : you must fence and dress the ardent growth of youth : you must preside over and assist at securing the harvest of maturity.

But citizens, in this, as in all other things, if you do not begin well, you will never end well. Those principles of freedom, which embrace only half mankind, are only *half systems*, and will not more support the burden of humanity, than the perpetual section of an arch will support a column. Our daughters are the same relations to us as our sons ; we owe them the same duties, they have the same science, and are equally competent to their attainments. The contrary idea originated in the same abuse of power, as monarchy and slavery, and owes its little remaining support to the idle sophistry.

Indeed the first moulding of the human mind, falls so naturally upon the sex, that the voice of nature would have induced us to fit them for the task, if the voice of nature had not been drowned in the clamour of our other prejudices. How shall our children learn fortitude from mothers who scream at the appearance of a spider ? How shall they learn that they are formed for their country and mankind, from mothers who know nothing of the history of either ?

How shall they learn that the "mind is the standard of the man," from teachers who are forever directing their attention to their persons? How shall they acquire habits of labour, and independence of spirit, from those whose debility of both mind and body, unfit them for either?

Had we no examples of women breaking down the barriers of the tyrant man, and storming the temple of fame, if we but reflected that the effects of their degradation recoiled upon ourselves, our own sense would induce us to rescue them from *tambour* and *fillagree*, and the endless concerns of the *toilet*, and raise them to nature and philosophy. But to confound our presumption, and forever to destroy our cobweb theories, the history of women is forever obtruding on our unwilling eyes, bold and ardent spirits, who no tyrant could tame, no prejudice enslave. Besides the heroic daughters of antiquity, our own age has been blessed with the deep classic erudition of a Dacier: the flowery meanderings of a Rowe: the comic wit of Centlivier: the laborious patience and republican energy of a Macaulay: the dramatic genius of Moore, of Lee, and of Inchbald: the melody and piety of Barbauld: the untaught towerings of Yeastly and Wheatly: the sprightly sallies of Piozzi: the magic pencil of Kaufman: the animated chisel of Damer; the unconquerable heroism of Roland, and the invulnerable reason of Mary Wolstoncraft!

**FEMALE CITIZENS**, follow examples so glorious; accept the station nature intended for you, and double the knowledge and happiness of mankind.

**CHILDREN**.—We of maturer age, are so far from thinking that we are the men, and that wisdom will die with us, that we look on our knowledge as mere folly, compared with what you will know. We were born at the close of a long night of ignorance; at the dawn, we hope, of a new era in the history of mankind—but *you* will see the *broad day light*. What it will reveal we know not. Most probably the prejudices, the short-sightedness, and crooked policy of your ancestors, will constitute the shade of the picture. You will then remember with horror and indignation, that there was a time when men of different nations used to meet in large fields to shed each others blood and you will rank such scenes foremost in the catalogue of crimes and their abettors amongst the worst enemies of the human race.

**CITIZENS** *of all ages*.—What is liberty? Is it a something that men may keep without care and lose without in-

jury? No citizens. Liberty is a tender plant, which wants the constant vigilance of its owner—he must weed, and water, and defend it *himself*; hirelings may destroy it by carelessness, by accident, or by design; and if once it withers, it is difficult to be restored.

**CITIZENS.** The habits of men who have been nursed under a monarchy ill comport with the simplicity of republicanism. It is not enough that we have a republican form of government, we must acquire a *republican mind*. We must be frugal, sober, industrious, self-dependent, privately and publicly hospitable. We must habitually investigate the remote consequences of our actions. We must eradicate national prejudices. We must (I repeat) withhold from *men* that homage which is due to *principles* alone. We must always remember that *men*, and not soil constitutes the state; that laws are expressions of the public will, and not the will of those who are paid for declaring it.

Finally. If when put in competition with principles, we count life, property, or fame any thing, we are in danger of soon counting our principles nothing. Our times are big with fate; some of us may have our fortitude put to the test; it is our duty to be prepared for all events. This preparation O citizens is the only safe tenure by which we can hold our liberties; it damps no joy, it hastens no calamity. Carry therefore, always about you the recollections, that “an hour of virtuous freedom is worth a whole eternity of bondage” and when you exercise the elective franchise, and when you assemble at your civic feasts,

“Assert the hallow'd rights that nature gave,  
“And let your last, best wish be freedom, or the grave.”

*Handwritten notes and signatures, including the name "Wm. Lloyd Garrison" and other illegible text.*

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THE  
FEMALE ADVOCATE.



**W**E read in the 7th chapter of Genesis, that when Noah entered the Ark, there went in two and two of all flesh, that had the breath of life, male and female.

As GOD in his great, good, and just Providence, has seen fit for many wise and obvious reasons, that the world should consist of male and female, I would ask the unprejudiced, the wise and the candid, how has Providence designed that they should conduct themselves toward each other:—As master and servant, or as companion and yoke-fellow? Do you not generously answer, and say, surely the latter! Why ought the one half of mankind, to vaunt, and lord it, over the other. The scripture saith, the man is not without the woman; nor the woman without the man. But as the world is already filled with books, and the greatest authors, sacred and profane, have displayed their talents, and geniuses, from Moses down to the present day, perhaps in the estimation of many, it will appear folly and arrogance for an aged matron, one too, who belongs to a class, whose weakness is become quite proverbial among the self sufficient lords of this lower world, if she should attempt to say any thing, in behalf of her own sex, or a single word on the long exploded subject of female merit. But the sensations of my mind are so wounded, when I hear my sex treated, as I think, with contempt, when I see them viewed by some, with self-distant superiority, and when I behold too many, seemingly adopt the sentiment of a titled nobleman, to his natural son, that women are destitute of sense and judgment, I expect, if not from this description of men, yet, at least, from the judicious and candid, a ready

apology will be found, for what may be attempted in the following lines.

Perhaps a strong motive, which induced me to make choice of this subject, and to collect what arguments might meet my mind, in the moments of contemplative leisure, was hearing it observed by one of the arrogant assumers of male merit, what appeared to me totally devoid of every foundation, and even the semblance of justice, that our sex arrived at its zenith of improvement, at the age of twenty-one.

This influenced me seriously to consider facts, on a theme, which to me was far from indifferent, as a friend to the sex. I then entered on a comparison of the male and female, in point of merit. The result of this investigation was as follows:—and is it possible said I to myself?—have I never improved, since that age, which is the period of admiration by the gay, the volatile and unprincipled. If so, what a pitiable misfortune to me, that I was born a woman! I who have been looking forward with such flattering hopes, and pleasing prospects, for a number of years, that I should be advancing in grace, and augmenting in knowledge, with views penetrating to a future world, and expanding with eternity.

But hush such fruitless disagreeable thoughts, on the ingratitude and reproaches of others. Why is it, said I, that we are so much more admired, adored and caressed, by the gentlemen, while in our youth, than at any other age? Doth it indicate wisdom, virtue, piety and worth; or doth it point out weakness, folly and levity. The age most admired by the other sex, is the very age, which, by that admiration, proves, not what they would wish to demonstrate, but *their* folly and *our* superior wisdom. It is an age, in which we are much the most addicted to foibles, and fondest of dress, gaiety and folly; yet this devotedness to vanity, pleases and captivates the other sex, and at once delineates their weakness. If that which is the very weakness of woman will effectually captivate the man of assumed superiority, and cause even a tyrant to forget his savage nature as we read in the Apocrypha, does it not prove, that the former possesses not only superior charms, but a mental quality which, though in youth, rises paramount to the boasted reason of the assuming lords of this world. The man boasts of his power, and talents and dominion; but the woman, with all her imagined weakness, will silently command their power, their wisdom and their authority,

to yield themselves, an obsequious victims to female merit, and cause them to pay obeisance, like the elder brethren of an ancient family, in scripture, to the superior genius of the younger brother.

I am sensible however, that in the age of youth, we are the most credulous, and the most pleased with the appellation of "Angels;" which is the source of that ridiculous fondness, they often please to bestow upon us. I know, also, that it is the best age for abominable, wicked, libertines to practise the art,—the wicked, cruel, and insinuating art of gallantry and seduction.—I, an aged matron, who have acted the part of a Duenna, to several misses, may perhaps be allowed to be, at least a tolerable judge of the age of weakness, and the age of wisdom.—The result of my observations is, that if female youth retain the character of a fair, unblotted, and unstained reputation, till after the age of twenty one, my anxiety for them may justly abate. It is my candid opinion, that where one has been seduced, and led astray, after that age, there have been fifty, perhaps I may say an hundred, before.—I would much sooner coincide, and agree, with the gentleman, who said, that our sex never shewed their real value, till after marriage; for the truth is, that the present distinctions are of so arbitrary a nature on the part of man, that a young lady never is admitted to any sphere of tolerable usefulness, till that period.

Without wishing, or intending, to give any offence to the young gentlemen, I shall now endeavor to make it appear, that an aged, pious and venerable matron, who has been full of good works all her days, is to be highly valued; that such a one, though passed over by the unprincipled part of mankind, is incalculably more worthy of being stiled, "Angelic," than that gay, and volatile age, which has the epithet usually conferred upon it.

Governed in my sentiments by the best of rules, the unerring guide of sacred writ, we find that in the days of our Saviour, and his Apostles, the aged ladies had a just preference, not only to youth, but to the other sex, in fidelity, affection and piety. How different then from the present day, in which men engross all the emoluments, offices, honours and merits of church and state. Not so was it in the primitive church, and ecclesiastical communities. St. Paul directs Timothy to admit them, under just conditions, as freely as the men, to offices of honour and public utility; and that too, at an age when, by modern thinkers, they



have past the season of usefulness. " At the age of three score years," he writes, " let them be taken into the number,"—that is, into the number of Deaconesses. It is well known to all conversant in the sacred writings, that such offices were filled by the female sex in the primitive and purest days of the church. But in modern times, instead of admission to office, they are not permitted even to speak in public, or to have a voice in the church. Will any contend that it was thus in the first church, and that even Paul himself discountenances the public speaking of women ; let me ask such, what the same Apostle meant, when he exhorts, " the woman not to pray or prophesy unveiled." This supposes that they were allowed, at least, in the veil, to prophesy as well as the men. But I am not limited to rest my cause on a single passage : It will be evident from many others, that women did assist in the church. For this end, we find the promise of the gift of prophecy, "that on my servants and handmaids, I will pour out, in those days, of my spirit, and they shall prophesy."—And again Paul to the Philippians, says, " And I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women who laboured with me in the Gospel," &c. Now will any one contend, that prophecy and labor in the church, can consist with the modern idea, that women must have no voice in the church ?

I know the Apostle says, in another place, which I hear mentioned much oftener than the former ;—" It is a shame for a woman to speak in the church ; but if they would learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home."—But I would ask,—what if they have no husbands, or what if their husbands, if they have any, are not of the church ; or what if, as is very common, the husband knows less of the scriptures than the wife ?—These texts, however, I will leave for the clergy to reconcile.

But since my pen has insensibly led me to the subject of women's speaking in the church, with submission, I shall venture to speak a word in vindication of my sentiments. Whether they be just or unjust must be determined by the reader's judgment. I readily acknowledge that I am far from wishing to see any of my sex teaching in public, or usurping authority : but if I do not misjudge, the point, as at present managed in our ecclesiastical communities, is carried much too far, in the exclusive male prerogative to teach, to censure, to govern without the voice of women, or the least regard to the judgment or assent of the other sex. If a woman may not vote, or speak, on any occasion whatever, even tho' she have no husband, from

whom to learn at home ; if she may not take any active part, by approbation or disapprobation, no not even in a silent vote, and that too when perhaps one of her own sex is a subject of discipline, or controversy, yea when, farther, as is generally the case, the great majority of the church is female, how, pray you, is the sex to be viewed ? Are they mere cyphers, or are they real members of the church ? Suppose almost the whole church be female, which is very supposeable, yea, which is not unfrequent, as will be evident to every one who views the usually constituting members of almost every ecclesiastical communion, and which fact will be corroborated by the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, which informs us that in all the revivals of religion, more females are found among the probable recipients of Divine Grace, than of the other sex —suppose then, that a church be found almost solely composed of women, shall they still have no voice ? Shall they not be consulted any more than if void of understanding ? Shall they be passed by with utter disregard ? Forbid it, candor ! Forbid it, oh thou all arrogating man ! Acknowledge thy equal, acknowledge thy fairer half, and sometimes *thy better half*. Candor never could have admitted the modern idea, had not custom arrogated right and power, while the meek and gentle piety of the genuine, female christian spirit submitted for the sake of christian peace. But as I have neither talents nor inclination, to controvert, or largely canvass the subject, shall say as before, I am willing to leave it to the venerable clergy, and return an advocate for the aged and respectable matron.

In this part of my subject, suffer me to enumerate several names, whose characters have received an honorary mention, and whose memories are eternized on the sacred page. Among these, I would not pass over the celebrity of the Elect Lady, to whom the beloved John has dedicated an holy epistle, on subjects highly and forever interesting. Let me next mention the amiable and pious Phebe, who was a servant of the church at Cenchrea, and, contrary to the modern innovation of female exclusion from office, admitted to an honorary distinction in one of the first of the primitive churches. Permit me, also, to glance on those celebrated female personages, mentioned by Paul, in his address to Timothy, while thus observing ;—“ When I call  
“ to mind the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt  
“ first in thy grand mother Lois, and thy mother Eunice ;  
“ and I am persauaded in thee, also.” Priscilla was the wife of Aquilla, but so far was Paul from being like the modern

advocates for male prerogative, and female exclusion, that, to the credit and honor of women, he speaks as much of the assistance of the former, as the latter. It is also observable, that he usually mentions her name before her husband's, and I think never speaks of the husband without some honorary testimony of his amiable and pious companion.

As connected with the above honorable list of names, let me next introduce the venerable and aged Deborah, when she arose a mother in Israel; when all the tribes repaired to her for counsel, and judgment.—Read carefully her history, mark her wisdom in peace, and her valor in war. Behold her talents in the most critical exigencies of the Hebrew State. Not a counsellor for direction, but repairs to her superior wisdom: not a general to conduct the affairs of war, but submits to her unrivalled talents: not a soldier to encounter danger, till led forth by her distinguished and supereminent valor. Read her history, ~~we~~ advocates for female exclusion: read it and blush for your folly in derogating from female worth.—Behold her ~~wielding~~ the sword with one hand, and the pen of wisdom with the other;—here sitting at the council board, and there, by her superior talents, conducting the arduous affairs of military enterprise! Say now, shall woman be forever destined solely to the distaff and the needle, and never expand an idea beyond the walls of her house?

From superior talents, were I next to touch on unsurpassed examples of piety and persevering faith, I would introduce the celebrated Prophetess Anna, a widow of fourscore and four years, who in addition to her public utility in the Hebrew church, by the gift of prophecy, so utterly inadmissible and incongruous with modern exclusive ideas, must also be allowed distinguished worth, for unusual faith in the promises, and piety toward God. She departed not from the temple but served the Lord day and night with fasting and prayer.

The pious Doct. Doddridge observes, that there are comparatively few, who have leisure for such extraordinary devotion, as the above mentioned venerable matron. Where it is found, let it be valued and improved. Often have I thought, when reading in pleasing melancholly and solitude, the life, death and resurrection of our blessed Lord and Savior, that women were much more affectionate and zealous in the humble services of piety, than is usually exhibited in the men. How attentive were they to the Saviour, and how ready and cheerful in the most humble chief-

tain offices. How fully did they express the affection and humility and love of a follower of the Lamb, when they washed his feet with tears, and wiped them with their flowing tresses. They did not think, as a pious author observes, the hair of the head, which was given them for an ornament and a crown, too good to be applied to wipe the feet of the Saviour.—When our Lord was crucified, who were they that were seen weeping while he was walking to mournful Calvary? They were the daughters of Jerusalem, whom HE addresses, saying, “Weep not for me.” While he was suspended on the cross, many women were there, beholding afar off, who followed Jesus from Galilee ministering unto him, with persevering piety and affection unto the last. After his death, with what holy fervor did they perform the melancholly task of officiating in the embalment of his sacred body? Who can read the account of their affectionate piety, while conveying the myrrh and the aloes, as ingredients for that sacred purpose, and contrast this with the doubting faith of the disciples, who could only say, “*We trusted* that it had been he, who should have redeemed Israel;”—who can observe this contrast, and not admire the strength and perseverance of female piety; who can read it, and not feel the holy flame of sacred love enkindling from such amiable examples.—Who were they that watched at the sepulchre of the Lord, to testify their love to him, and to his memory? Who were they that were first there in the morning after his crucifixion, approaching the holy grave, and thence deriving the highest motives to aid their early devotions? who were the persons, to whom the risen Saviour first condescended to make his appearance, and confirm their humble faith and hope in the Messiah, as a reward for their affectionate and faithful attention to him? The enquiry is answered in a word. Women have thus been distinguished for piety, and the first discoveries of the Saviour's love. Oh how does my heart vibrate, and expand with joy, and glow with gratitude, in meditating on such honorary testimonials of female worth!

I hope, says a very pious and justly celebrated author, that I shall give no offence, by observing the following sentiments. “I am very serious in saying, that the frequent mention, which is made in the Evangelists, of the generous and courageous zeal of some pious women, in the service of Christ, and especially of their faithfulness and resolute constancy, with which they attended him, in those last scenes of his sufferings, might, very possibly, be intended to obviate that senseless contempt, which

“ the pride of men, often irritated by those vexations, to  
 “ which their own irregular passions have exposed them,  
 “ has in all ages, affected to throw on that sex, which  
 “ probably in the sight of God, constitute by far the bet-  
 “ ter half of mankind, and to whose care and tenderness,  
 “ the wisest and best of men, generally owe and ascribe  
 “ much of the daily comforts and enjoyments of life.”

Enough, cries my satisfied soul! Let the wise and pious but concede an equality between the sexes; let them reprove the vain, the arrogant and assuming advocates for female exclusion, and we are contented with less than the concessious of the above pious defender of female worth, “ *that women constitute the better half of mankind.*” I aspire to nothing more than the just rank, which God and nature designed, that equality of talents, of genius, of morals, as well as intellectual worth, which, by evident traits, does exist between the sexes; but of which the arrogance of modern self-sufficiency would totally divest us had it the power.

With this concession, I envy not kings their kingdoms; I envy not the nobles or proud potentates of the earth. I contend indeed for the honour of intellectual worth, as an advocate for the injured sex, but the height of my ambition is, not to be great, but good. Let greatness be the portion of the aspiring world; be it the lot of me, to become a humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, that “ my name may be written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

As the wise Disposer of all events has seen fit to lodge my soul, while a probationer on earth, for a never ending eternity, in that tenement, which the world terms the weaker vessel, permit me only the rank, which the unvarying laws of nature have given; rob me not, by assuming arrogance, and sovereign contempt, of that equality, which creation equally meted to both the sexes; and I ask no more. I covet not the glory of princes, but wish, by moral worth, to be a faithful votary of the true religion, which enlarges the spirit, and capacitates it for more than crowns can give; even for the presence of that God from whose right hand flow rivers of everlasting joy.

In farther discussing the subject, and elucidating my sentiments, which I wish to do without giving just occasion for offence, I would ask the impartial and candid, when treating of female merit, not only where wisdom dwells, or whether it be limited to the males; but that which is far more important, where morals, the first mark of wisdom, and that to which all intellectual endowments

must be subservient, if truly valuable, are found to reside ? Which is the most given to all manner of gross immorality ? Which is the most devoted to the vile practices of intemperance, prophaneness, lust, and unnatural affections ; the man or the woman ? Which is the most enslaved to other criminal practices, such as theft, perjury, or even the first of sins, the shedding of man's blood :—If it must be answered, the man ! it requires not the pen of the learned to demonstrate which, in the sight of the all seeing God, constitutes the better half of mankind ; better in the best sense ; better not in wisdom only, which men arrogate to themselves ; but better in that quality, which constitutes the highest wisdom, the discriminating wisdom which elevates the human above the animal, the intellectual above the brutal nature.

But probably you will ask which is the greatest hero or politician, the greatest historian or philosopher, or, in a word, which is the most skilled in the arts and sciences ?—But in answer ;—let it be asked, which of the sexes has the most haughtiness to arrogate, and engross, all to themselves ? Do not the men impiously assume that all, to their own imagined superiority ? Do they not say,—it becomes the woman to be meek, humble, and submissive. Humility indeed is a virtue which becomes them ; but does it not also become the men ? or would they be pleased with humility, appropriate to the female sex, that they might more securely gain a triumph ? Humility, however, is a virtue, which I would wish to possess, as the first of graces, the first of blessings, and the first sure argument of real wisdom. Its opposite vice, I view as totally repugnant, alike to real wisdom, and true christianity. While I hear my Saviour say, “ Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly,”—my soul would reply, this Lord is my desire. May my little bark glide gently, and steal softly, through the vale of humble life, till it mount the ascending summit of ever rising day.

Were I now to pass from the open scenes of life, to domestic relations, the usual and useful sphere of woman, where the world would wish solely to limit them, shall we not find traits of excellence, which fairly entitle them, at least, to approximate the modern self-sufficient man ?

In the domestic circle, do we not often behold the faithful and affectionate, the pious and tender-hearted wife, or mother, in sympathetic kindness, fulfilling her part of the marriage covenant, while the cruel, hard-hearted husband, is lavishly spending his time, and property, which ought

to be devoted to the support of his wife and offspring, at the gaming table, "*that standard of the devil,*" or in wicked, lewd, and abandoned company.

If by intemperance and debauchery he is laid on a sick bed, with what resignation, zeal and solicitude : with what unwearied assiduity, tenderness and anxiety, doth the kind and affectionate wife administer to him. May I not say with propriety, that kind, condoling, care warms every vein, and beats in every pulse ! But had the wife been the aggressor, what would been the alternative ? Must not a separation have taken place, and she have been turned into the wide world, without a farthing for her support, though she had brought him thousands ? Is not this the law for the guilty wife ? but there is none such for the equally criminal husband. I appeal to the unprejudiced mind, whether this be not the difference between the cruel, hard-hearted, husband, and the tender and affectionate wife ? On the part of the latter, all is forgiveness, and charity which covers a multitude of sins ; but on the part of the husband, all is revenge, or retaliation, if the wife offend. I do not intend, by this, to intimate that there are no exceptions, for I am very sensible that there are many fair ornaments to human nature, who carry the Christian principles of charity and forgiveness, as far as any, of the sex whose part, I am now advocating.

Now for a moment, let me turn your attention to the young, while in the years of tender adolescence. Can it be said, that Chesterfield has no pupils in the world ; no infidel wretches, who are assiduously practising the art of gallantry and seduction, add taking the advantage of the credulous, unsuspecting, unexperienced, young and tender minds ? Is it not true that when by art, under the soft appellation of gallantry, or the fine feelings of sentimental affection ; when by that cruel, wicked, artifice of flattery, and lying, they have made a conquest of innocence, they straightway go and boast of that, which ought to be the greatest blot in their character. And yet the consequence of this injurious conduct is, that the villian is admitted to honors and emoluments, at least it becomes no impediment to his promotion, while the injured fair one, once innocent and beloved by her parents, receives a stain, by one act of indiscretion, which she can never obliterate, or fully wear away. Why is it, that woman must forever suffer reproach for a single crime, though deceived by the superior artifice of a man of the world, who has learned the art of gallantry, as one would a trade, while the latter, though

far more criminal, as much more so, as the deceiver than the deluded, shalt, notwithstanding one or a hundred similar villainies, be caressed, esteemed and admitted to honorary employments.

The candid and discerning will, I believe, better discriminate between the different demerits of the sexes, and be more just in their esteem of the one, or the other. Such candor, I have seen, and, with pleasure, noticed in one, who was just enough to acknowledge, that the world is ungenerous in their different treatment of the two sexes, in the crimes here supposed. He could not see, why one should yet retain a character unsullied in the estimation of men, though guilty of repeated artifice and deception, to the lasting injury of the unsuspecting, while the deluded, for a single indiscretion, must suffer perpetual infamy, or the most piercing neglect. In his opinion, the man who could basely impose on the honest heart of unsuspecting innocence, and after winning her affections by the soft and prevailing rhetoric of gallantry, could ungenerously leave her to sorrow, shame and despair, is more detestable than a common robber, in the same proportion as private treachery is more villainous than open force, and money of less concern than character and happiness.

But it is time to turn the reader's attention from such polluted wretches and vile libertines, to those with whom it is a privilege and honour for our sex, to form the nearest and most sacred union. In perusing the letters of the pious Bennet, or the writings of the well known, truly accomplished and much admired Doct. Watts, we rise as it were to a superior world, and a new order of beings. We are ready to forget for a season, that they can, even in their nature, be more allied to the former description of characters, than angelic and human intelligences. The first of the two gentlemen just quoted, observes in his letters to his niece : " They who speak degradingly of women, do not know the value of the treasure which they despise. They have not sufficient taste to relish their excellence, or purity enough to court their acquaintance. They take the portrait of an abandoned woman, and think her features applicable to the whole sex. Women, it is certain are exceedingly injured by their education. If they were, what they should be esteemed, they are those lights in the picture of human life, that are intended to cheer all its darkness and its shades." The other writer, when touching on the subject of present controversy, observes as follows. " What is it, but custom, that has



“ for ages past, confined the brightest geniuses, even of  
 “ the highest rank in the female world, to the business of  
 “ the needle only and secluded them most unmercifully  
 “ from the pleasures of knowledge and the divine improve-  
 “ ments of reason.”

To these two amiable advocates for female worth, per-  
 mit me to add the observations of another, whose name I  
 cannot now command. “ To see one half of the human  
 “ race excluded by the other, from all participation of gov-  
 “ ernment, is, to me, a political phenomenon, which accord-  
 “ ing to abstract principles, I hold to be impossible to ex-  
 “ plain.”

How widely varying is the language of these gentlemen,  
 from that of those who say with their Mahometan brethren,  
 and in the genuine spirit of a disciple of the prophet of  
 Mecca, “ Women have no souls, or women were made for  
 “ their service.” Justly may we suppose, that such men  
 would rejoice to unite with that Tartar guide, who loaded  
 his mule with female slaves, the fruit of his purchase, and  
 was conveying them according to the custom of some of the  
 dominions of the Sultan, like other matters of traffic, to  
 dispose of them in the best market. What an unhappiness  
 it must be to such men that they were not born in Turkey—  
 or had not early become disciples, and subjects of the Ara-  
 bian Prophet. To compensate for this misfortune, let  
 such be advised to engage in the African slave-trade, where  
 females can yet be purchased, and to whom they may  
 preach successfully, the pleasing doctrine of libertinism,  
 “ that women have no souls ;” or were made to be entirely  
 devoted to menial services, domestic employments solely,  
 and bow to the arbitrary pleasure of the self assuming, self  
 created, tyrant. Horrid ideas! How my heart vibrates  
 with anger at such thoughts! Could I be led to believe,  
 that my calling was no higher than for the service of a lib-  
 ertine, the advocate of brutism, for surely none but such,  
 will make use of such language. Alas! how would I de-  
 test the light of yonder sun, or lament that I had an exist-  
 ance on earth; or that I was not an animal void of intellec-  
 tual, and rational endowments.

But such will reply, doth not the scripture teach us the  
 language, “ that women were made for men, and not man  
 for the woman?” How easy a matter is it to pervert any  
 scripture, and make it speak any language, by sinister men,  
 and with sinister views?—Is it not also said, that angels  
 were made for men, and not men for angels. At least so  
 much is said of this nature, as to justify such an interpreta-

tion here, as really as in the former case. For speaking of the angels the apostle observes, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them, that shall be heirs of salvation." And again, "the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." And may I not say with propriety, that the scriptures were made for man, and not man for the scriptures. There is an ancient proverb; "What we wish we easily believe." No other reason can be assigned for the forced and unnatural construction of passages of scripture like either of the above, to countenance that arrogant prerogative which the self assuming Lords of this world would imagine themselves justified in usurping.

An ingenious author, speaking of the pretensions of some to exclusive pre-eminence, when compared with the future world, observes, "Souls are of no sex, any more than genius, wit or any other of the intellectual faculties." With this idea, Paul's sentiments appear to congenialize, when he observes, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ."

Much and often has the world exclaimed against masculine women. Before I offer any sentiment on this exclamation, I would wish to hear the word properly and fairly defined. If by the epithet "Masculine," be meant a bold, assuming, haughty arrogant, all sufficient, dogmatical, temper and spirit, I would wish totally and entirely to discard it from the society of the fair sex. I would wish the term to be applied, where I think it is appropriate, by long established custom. I am quite willing that the other sex should share it altogether to themselves. But if by the word "Masculine," be meant a person of reading and letters, a person of science and information, one who can properly answer a question, without fear and trembling, or one who is capable of doing business, with a suitable command over self; this I believe to be a glory to the one sex, equally with the other.—The sole reason why the epithet is disgraceful, in the estimation of many, is because custom, which is not infallible, has gradually introduced the habits of seeing imaginary propriety, that all science, all public utility, all superiority, all that is intellectually great and astonishing, should be engrossed exclusively by the male half of mankind.—But may I not securely say, that it is a point of great consequence, that we should have an equal share in science, or that degree of education, at least, which enables us, in some measure, to have command over our-

selves, and become superior to those base artifices of the many, by which numerous females, through the want of suitable privileges in education, have been the dupes of men inferior to themselves, in every other respect but this single advantage, of education.

Are we not sensible, my female friends, and have we not often heard it observed, by the other sex, as an objection to our possessing peculiar advantages for scientific improvements, that they cannot so easily command the ascendancy over us ; but why should we wish them to have this dominion, if we are sensible that that is often, and, may I not say, almost always, the reason and foundation of our ruin. A young lady of the greatest purity of mind, yet uneducated, is frequently a victim to the arts of seductions: differently advantaged by knowledge, the seducer would have respected her virtues, and conducted with becoming deference. Thus, a second advantage would be the consequence of female education. It would reform the men, or at least prevent, or restrain, many of those artifices, which are now too successfully used, with innocent, uneducated, and unsuspecting females.

If a well informed mind will be the mean of enabling us to possess some command over ourselves, of what infinite consequence and importance is it to us, that we read both men and books, and study to acquire all that theoretic and practical information, which enlarges the soul.

Now I observe, that if the above description of useful and scientific information, which has hitherto been arbitrarily appropriated to the males, is intended by the epithet "Masculine education," instead of being terrified from such pursuits, by fear of the term, I would wish to be one of that accomplished number.

But why is the fair book of knowledge hidden from our research ? Why is it no farther disclosed to our view ? Do we deserve the reproach of those men, who, in all the pride of scholastic literature, depreciate our natural talents ?—How different the sentiments of the worthy Burton, in his lectures on female education. "The capacities of each sex, he justly observes, are equal. That this is true, he continues, may be easily perceived, by an attentive observer of children, previous to the culture of tuition. If any difference be then discernible, it is certainly in favor of girls : who in general display a greater share of vivacity, and a readier talent for conversation, than boys. Were a similar plan of education to be adopted, the women, without doubt, would be well informed in the system of human

knowledge, as the men. There are women, who have given ample testimony of the quickest genius, with a discernment and penetration equal to the ablest statesman."—Plutarch, speaking of the sexes, says, "The talents and virtues are modified by the circumstances, but the foundation is the same."

If my mind is not strongly prepossessed, when reading history, in favor of my sex, government has prospered and flourished to as high, if not higher grade of dignified excellence, under the direction of female, than male, administration.—If I mistake not, since the reign of William the Conqueror, there have been nearly ten men to one woman, who have filled the British throne. If this be a fact, notwithstanding the great disparity; if out of the small number of female sovereigns, there can be named one, who has been equal, or more than equal to any King of England, who ever reigned before, or since, doth it not strongly enforce this argument, that it is possible for a woman to arrive to as great a degree of literary excellence, and as high a grade in every qualification, which forms the mind for real greatness, in the most responsible stations, as can be exhibited by the other sex.

I should suppose it unnecessary for me to elucidate the above assertion, by adverting to the celebrity of that illustrious Queen Elizabeth, whose character, in real greatness, has irradiated the British empire.—Perhaps never a monarch had intellectual powers, less uninterrupted in exercise, even to the last moments of a very great age, than this illustrious ruler of a great and magnanimous realm. Did not the science of the scholar, the penetration of the politician, and the profoundness of the statesman, and the ruler, meet in her? Did England so justly celebrated for talents, and victory and greatness, ever flourish more in one reign, advance nearer to the zenith of human perfectibility, or gain more laurels of triumph, than under her wise and enlightened administration?

But will not the same mean illiberality of spirit, which has said, "Although a female may ostensibly wield the pen, yet it is certain some men, of literary talents, sits behind the curtain to guide its movements," say in the present instance, that whenever the wheels of government have been successfully rolled by the reign of a woman, it is to be imputed to the influence of a good minister, or wise counselor. To this I reply; probably never did a King reign on the British throne, or wield the scepter even to a very great age with a greater spirit of independence than the illustrious

ous Queen, whose name is before us. Who was ever more distinguished than she, for retaining in her own hands, the entire reins of dominion, or which of her subjects, was able to penetrate the arcana of her policy, which she had locked up in her heart from the most scrutinizing eye of her many jealous and vigilant partizans? How sparingly did she ever divulge any secrecy of importance, even to her privy counsellors, and how remarkably sparing in the bestowment of favors, or the conferment of promotion?—But it is not my talent, nor is it through the organ of my pen, that the trump of her fame is to be sounded.—The literary world has been sufficiently liberal in celebrating her greatness, and her illustrious deeds.

While the name of Elizabeth is recent in my mind, it calls forth a crowd of illustrious names, who have shown in different spheres, with distinguished radiance. As an historian, who will not admire the elegant pen of a Macaulay, the nervous, independent and the ingenious writings of Lady M. W. Montague. Of miss Wolstoncraft I shall say little, though her writings be highly original and enterprisingly literary, because her merit will be all-passed over, under the epithet of “Masculine;” and every thing which approximates to male merit, will surely be decried. In poetry, numbers might be produced, who have shone with superior brilliancy of talents. In moral writings, the excellence of a Chapone must be admitted, but will recede before the all conquering piety of the amiable and devout Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe, whose fine writings and beautiful poetry are so much read and admired, by the pious and literary part of the world. This worthy woman retained the amiable and strong powers of her mind, till the last. This is evident by “the devout exercises of her heart,” a book much read and admired, as a devotional work, written just before her death, and dedicated to her true friend and great admirer Doct. Watts, and published by him soon afterwards. Was not this all-accomplished,—and may I not say with propriety, “Angelic Lady,” the pride and glory of her sex, and an ornament to human nature. A venerable lady seventy-two years of age, full of piety and good works from her youth up; of such a sweet and amiable temper, that it has been disputed, amongst her friends, whether she was ever out of humour in her life. Behold her sitting and sociably conversing with her friends in the evening,—and before morning was probably company for angels.—But may it not justly be noticed, that those eminent and worthy ornaments of their sex, were in a different

situation from their sisters, in this respect, that it was their privilege not to be confined to domestic cares;—to those cares which in my opinion retard and prevent our acquiring those scientific improvements, which, I am contending, ought as really to be shared for the one, as the other sex. Let the customs of the modern world be ratified, let the women be viewed as intitled to a share with the men, in literary concerns, and we should find, not once in an age only, but, every year, there would arise female geniuses unsurpassed by all the boasted superiority of the present assumers of universal merit.

What circumstance, justly weighed, can be fairly adduced to influence any impartial mind to believe, that the intellectual talents of the female sex, are not as susceptible of improving and advancing in literary pursuits, as far as the males. If this be not the case, why doth not life cease earlier in them, or sooner, than in the other sex.

According to the analogy of nature, that species which is capable of the greatest improvement, is longest protracted: but I have never heard, to my remembrance, such an idea suggested, as that males could boast of longevity beyond the females, which is an almost infallible law both in the animal and vegetable worlds.

Why then may not all the seeming difference between the sexes, be imputed solely to the difference of their education and subsequent advantages?—Here let us draw a just and plain parallel between the education of a sister and her brother. Perhaps they are sent to the same school, till the age of ten or twelve years. Here the advantages of their improvement are the same, and their actual augmentation of mind is equal, unless there be a real superiority of genius, in the female youth, which is a case not unusual. Behold the arbitrary distinctions which are, next, made between them. The brother is taken from a common school, and transmitted to an academy, or a collegiate life; next becomes a divine, a lawyer or physician; the whole term of time, including usually from seven to nine years. But how is the time of his sister occupied, after she is taken from her early school. Immediately she is removed from every mean of literary improvement, and almost as effectually immured in a house, as a roman catholic Nun. She is admitted to walk in no road of preferment, and has before her, no incentives to aspire to public utility, by superior enlargement of mind. No! that is not the path for her to walk. Science and public utility are exclusively appropriated to the males.—See the invariable sister's fate!

If she be not sent to a nunnery, she is at least confined to domestic labor, and utterly secluded from all public concerns.

If not thus limited, she must have what the world calls a polite education: such as dancing, music, embroidering, altering and adjusting the fashion of her apparel. I have heard it, and I think very justly, observed, as an apology for females when frequently conversing, and being more disposed than the men, to talk of fashion, dress, amusements and the polite customs of the fair world, that the former were precisely following the natural and almost necessary effect of their appropriate education. A young Miss is taught to esteem it of the utmost consequence to her success in life, that she be dressed fashionably, and observe the external graces. It requires but a small share of sagacity, for her to discern, that unless she pay more attention to outward ornaments, than intellectual endowments, she will not be noticed by the other sex, on whom is her dependence for a partner, or, shall I say, "master," for life. For high intellectual endowments, she would rather be avoided, in the view of a connexion for life, as these would be qualities incompatible with that arbitrary sovereignty, which the man would wish to have fully established in his domestic empire. To such a man, when she is united by the dearest ties, how are the best of her days, and the prime of her life to be devoted?—In a way truly, which I acknowledge to be highly beneficial; in the employments of the house and the nursing of children, and imbruing their tender minds with the early precepts of true wisdom. But beneficial as it may be, does not this confined mode of living, and devoting our rolling years, afford sufficient arguments, why females do not advance in literary acquisitions, and the knowledge of men and manners, and the concerns of more public utility so far as the other sex.

Let us farther, in the pursuit of the general arguments of the subject before us, descant for a moment on a class of our fellow men, who have for ages been holden in the vilest bondage:—I mean the African race. Divested of almost every advantage for intellectual improvement, we may perhaps derive a good additional argument for the elucidation of the equality of intelligence naturally between the sexes. In this class of human beings, we may fairly see the force of nature, unaided by art or cultivation, as it respects the male and the female. Do we find in these human souls, that distinction of intelligence, which is con-

tested among the whites? If there be a difference in point of natural talents, between the sexes in the African race, is not that difference evidently in favour of the females? What African has displayed a greater share of genius, and stronger mental powers, than the justly celebrated Phillis Wheatley, whose poetical writings are so much read and applauded. How long had the world been accustomed to believe this despised race to be really inferior? How unjust in making no allowance between their children, and those of the whites, in early education, early ideas of liberty in the one, and of slavery, which never fails to depress the mind in the other. But in returning from the regions of slavery, which are at this day irradiating, by the all cheering sun of liberty, will not the last observations enable us to discern, that the only cause of the discrimination between the sexes, in the Christian world, arises from the early difference in education, and total distinction of future temporal prospects as to public utility.

Let us for a moment advance the supposition, that this distinction were reversed in favour of the females. What would be the consequence, if the doors of our seminaries were as effectually shut against the gentlemen, as they now are against the other sex;—and colleges and superior schools of scientific improvement, were appropriately open to the benefit of the female world. I ask what would then be the consequence? Would it not be a *complete reverse* of superiority in the sexes. Methinks I see some of my sex smilingly say, surely the result is indisputably true. The scale of literature would soon preponderate in our favour, and the gentlemen become of course, the same ignorant, weak and pitiable beings, as they now view the females. May I not add? “And a little more awkward too.”—But hush, I will say no more, lest I should give offence. It is not my design, if in my power to enter the lists as a candidate for a paper battle; I wish only to be indulged in a little railery on the other sex, in return for far more bitter things, and much severer satire, which they have long uttered against female talents. Thus much I will add for their consolation, they need not ever fear the most distant probability of our soaring above them, so long as domestic confines, and the nursery of children are our destiny and employment all the prime of our lives, and the best of our days. But what I desire of them is that they lay no more on us, than God in his providence has designed.

As we are co-heirs of immortality, let us walk hand in



hand, as equals in nature, and not as the master and servant. Women were figuratively, if not literally taken from man's side, a station where I have reason to suppose and believe the good and pious are willing, and do choose, to see us placed. For once be candid, and throw off all arrogant pretensions to natural superiority, and the strength of native genius above the females. Be candid like Watts, like Doddridge, like Bennet, like Newton, whose names have been quoted. How, my female friends, can we too much admire their character, in emerging so nobly from the usual prejudices of their sex, and in advocating female merit.

On the ground of equality alone, is there a prospect of true, permanent, and endearing friendship:—friendship not like that between the master and his faithful slave, but like fellow rationals, engaged in the same cause, ennobled by the same prospects, and travellers to the same eternity of intellectual and moral delights. Without this equality, there can be no esteem, and consequently no true rational felicity in the connubial state; nor reciprocity of sentiments, interchanging and inspiring intellectual life, and glows of moral and sentimental joy, in that union, which, on earth, when justly formed presents us, the most lively portrait of heavenly bliss, which can be exhibited in living colours.

A certain author, I think it is Wallaston, in his “Religion of Nature delineated,”—speaking of the authority of masters over their servants, and of parents over their children, says,—“I purposely omit mentioning the authority of husbands over their wives, because I think that point is carried much too far.” This brings to my mind the observations of a Roman Sage. “I think it of more consequence, to be a good husband, than a great senator.”—Surely our sex will justly appreciate such men, and such sentiments, whenever they appear. We will congratulate those, who have had the happiness to spend their lives, with such philanthropic souls.

And is there not utterly a fault in us, that we make no more distinction between such worthy characters, and those who, on the reverse, walk about, I do not say, like roaring lions, but, like vile libertine wretches, seeking whom they may seduce. As of certain reptiles, it is said that nothing better pleases them, than to counterfeit the cry of an infant, to lead them to success and bound for the prey: so with these sons of luxury, nothing better pleases than

the counterfeiting of pure innocence, that they may spring for the spoil. Vile men, cruel assassin! yet under the specious forms of gallantry and fine sentiments, they find admittance to the society of those ladies, whose pure ideas are as opposite to theirs, as Heaven is to Hell.

To turn from such disgusting characters, can we, on the reverse, too much admire, or too much venerate such pious men, who imitate the example of our blessed Saviour, whose kindness and affectionate attention to our sex, we may read in our sacred book, in our retired moments of leisure. Probably one reason why our Saviour was thus peculiarly attentive to the sex, whose neglected worth is now advocated, was like almost every other part of his conduct, to be an example to Christians in after ages. Perhaps also, another reason, which has been entertained by some, was that by the power and operation of the Divine Spirit, woman, at the exclusion of man, was instrumental in uniting Deity to humanity, in that high and all intrusting event of the incarnation of the Messiah. How can we my female friends read the first chapter of Luke, where the angel Gabriel visited the blessed Virgin, and the salutation that passed between her and Elizabeth, how can we read those affecting and beautiful lines of sacred inspiration, and our hearts not glow within us, expand with gratitude and leap with holy extacy. What high and distinguished honour was then conferred on our sex.

But to return from this digression to the importance and justness of admitting the idea of an equality between the sexes; how greatly doth a man of science misjudge in choosing a companion for life, if he selects one from the class of the ignorant and untaught, that he may, by this mean, the more securely retain his favorite supremacy. Is it not a total blindness to the ideas of refined happiness, arising from a reciprocity of sentiments, and the exchange of rational felicity, as well as an illiberal prejudice, thus to conduct?—Shall the woman be kept ignorant, to render her more docile in the management of domestic concerns? How illy capable is such a person of being a companion for a man of refinement? How miserably capable of augmenting his social joys, or managing prudently the concerns of a family, or educating his children? Is it not of the utmost consequence, that the tender mind of the youth receive an early direction for future usefulness? and is it not equally true, that the first direction of a child necessarily becomes the immediate and peculiar province of the woman? And

may I not ask, is not a woman of a capacious and well stored mind, a better wife, a better widow, a better mother, and a better neighbor ; and shall I add, a better friend in every respect ?

What a great disparity between a man well educated in the several branches of useful science, and an ignorant unlettered woman, for a companion ? How can their days glide smoothly together, in a connection which requires mutual counsel, aid and dependance ? How can they enjoy the refined pleasure of intermingling souls, interchanging sentiments, and reciprocating the feelings of the heart. The two sexes are designed for mutual improvement in happiness, and for enjoying a reciprocation of affections. But this can never be the case, if the one be so much degraded as to act, not like the friend, but the slave of the other. A certain writer observes, " If domestic servitude be the general allotment of women, they can no longer be considered as rational companions, or as qualified for the pleasing endearments of society." Wallaston observes, " The more intelligence women acquire, the more they will be attached to their duty, by fully comprehending and realizing its value. If women are educated in dependence, that is, to act in perfect subjection, and with implicit obedience to a fallible being, and submit, right or wrong, to arbitrary power, where are we to stop ?—I can by no means coincide with Milton, notwithstanding the great ingenuity he has displayed in his Paradise Lost. He represents Eve saying to Adam, " God is thy law ; thou mine. To know no more is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise."—I shall just take the liberty to observe, that I should suppose such doctrine to his wife, must sound harsh, and may well be supposed to have been the occasion of her leaving him. Must woman have no law but her husband ?—Has she not a rational nature, as well as the man ? and is she not equally accountable for the improvement or misuse of her judgment ? How painfully was the sensation of my mind lately touched, and mortified at seeing one of my sex, who it seems had been fully indoctrinated in the sentiment, that the husband is the wife's law ? I thought she very greatly degraded the dignity of woman, when I heard her say, " I never took a penny of my husband's money in my life, without obtaining his previous consent." And pray, what could an honest servant say more ?—I once had the knowledge of a woman's going in the simplicity of her heart to one of her neighbours, to ask her advice, whether she tho't

she had done wrong. She said there was a certain small article much needed in the family, and that her husband was unwilling to purchase it ; that she took some of his money without his knowledge, and bought it ; but that no one in the family was more benefited by it than himself. The good honest hearted woman returned home abundantly satisfied, on being told by her neighbour, that it was her opinion she had done no iniquity.

Mrs. Griffith says, in her letters on economy, that there should be no reserve of expence on either side ; and where there is but one heart, one might imagine there should be but one purse. Surely one purse is sufficient for the united husband and wife, who walk hand in hand, in the bands of nature, harmony, and affection. Who can read the life of the eminently pious John Newton, and especially his letters to his wife, and not admire the reciprocal affection, esteem, and mutual sentiments of respect there exhibited to view : not the veneration of a slave to her master, but the esteem of valuable friends and equals united in the tenderest and dearest alliance. How generous is he in acknowledging her worth, and his high obligations, under Providence, to her, for his reformation, and all his usefulness : that she was the mean of reclaiming him from error ; that he scarce ever did any thing without consulting her, and that if he ever did, he was almost sure to repent of it. What an acknowledgement here, of the superiority and worth of woman ? How much would one of our modern self-sufficient lords endure, rather than make what would be to him such a humiliating concession ? To return to the last mentioned worthy Divine.—How did he continue to appreciate the value of woman, even to the end ?—How sincerely did he mourn the loss when she was no more ? Length of time could not obliterate the dear remembrance nor efface his never dying love. Years successively roll over his solitary soul, and succeeding anniversaries serve only to renew the grief, and produce elegiac reflections. Read but the following beautiful and affecting lines, written on the second anniversary after her decease, and be convinced of all I have attested.

“ If death could break our union past !

“ Frail though endeared the tie :

“ The stronger bonds of grace shall last,

“ When death itself shall die.”

Are we, my female friends, sufficiently sensible that it is the good, the learned and the pious part of mankind,

who treat us with due respect and tenderness, as companions and equals; and not with the superiority of a master to a slave. Of what great consequence is it to us then, that we endeavour to make choice of such for companions through this vain ensnaring world. Seldom do we find a man of religion, united to good sense and an enlightened mind, who will assume the airs of superiority over the wife of his bosom, the companion of his soul.

In connexion with this idea, I congratulate you on the approximation of that happy era, when light and science shall be still more diffused, and good men shall more prevail. The scale of literature fast preponderates in our favor, and liberty increases throughout, as science augments. "Great is the truth, and it must prevail."

Pardon the multitude of my quotations, since they are mostly from the scriptures and men of piety, though they be adverse to the ideas entertained by many, of women's inferiority, as to intelligence, compared with the other sex. A gentleman in a late magazine observes, "Nothing conduces so much to the dignity and happiness of society, as perfect equality and frequent intercourse," in every species of information between the sexes. When women no longer the humble dependent, or the obsequious slave, but the companion and friend, is party to an attachment founded on mutual esteem, then, and not till then, does man assume his intended rank in the scale of creation. Why should women be called the weaker sex, when it is acknowledged, that they take much more care of their reputation, than the men.

As I observed before, that a woman of information, and one viewed by her husband as a companion, made the better wife and the better widow, I beg leave to state a supposition, as I imagine to the point. Suppose one who has from her youth been indoctrinated, and habituated to sentiments of female inferiority, one who has never been suffered to have an opinion of her own, but, on the reverse, has been taught and accustomed to rely, and implicitly believe, right or wrong, on her parents, guardian, or husband. What will be the consequence of all this, in a situation when deprived of the counsel of either or all of them, she is necessitated to act for herself, or be exposed to the fraudulence of an unfriendly world? Perhaps she is left a widow, with a large property, and a flock of small dependent children? but where have they to look for protection, or on whom to rely, but on their insufficient, helpless moth-

er! How poorly capable is she to fill the vacancy, and act to her tender babes and orphans, in their bereaved situation, as is absolutely necessary, both as father and mother? How incapable also is she of assisting in the settlement and adjustment of the estate; how liable to fraud, and how probable to be injured by unreal, or exaggerated debts.

But to enumerate the inconveniences, which daily attend a helpless ignorant widow, is far beyond my reach, and perhaps penetrates beyond the sensibilities of the most refined writer. No less unhappy is the consequence that follows the unfortunate wife, who has been kept in her leading-strings all her days, and has no idea of taking the management of any business upon her unassisted self. Her husband views himself her guide and protector, treating her more as a child, or riper servant, than as companion and friend.—The good-hearted woman has lived all her days in ease and affluence, having never tasted the bitter cup of poverty, nor affliction. She thinks that her mountain standeth strong, and she shall never be moved. But perhaps through her ignorance, or her husband's extravagance, they live far beyond their abilities. Their neighbors are secretly whispering her unhappy situation, but the poor woman must be kept entirely ignorant, for no one is willing to be author of such ill tidings, nor to converse with her on a subject of so delicate a nature, till the creditor makes his demand, and the officer comes, in a very unfeeling and unmerciful manner, to execute his duty. The consequence is, that the unhappy family is left destitute of the comforts, yea, of the very necessaries of life.—Alas, the unhappy woman! What a sudden transition from affluence to poverty, from prosperity to extreme wretchedness. All this, not unobtrusively ends in a state of indigence, as well as total ruin. Does not experience daily teach us, that, in this world, many things are far from what they should be; yet they must remain imperfect, in a measure, as we find them.

But modesty whispers me, and reason ratifies the admonition, that it is time to quit my subject and my pen. But before I do this, permit me to conclude by inserting a few words in the name of personality. I candidly confess that, for a number of years, I have had a fondness, or if you please to give it a different appellation, "a mania for scribbling." Usually, when I have taken my pen, in the moments of contemplative leisure, it has been devoted to the muses. Deviating from my fond love of poetic meas-

ures, I wished, for once, to exert my genius in prose. But what shall be my subject, was the next enquiry? The preceding theme occurred to me, as good, and what, if well conducted, might not be unuseful.

Perhaps these lines may chance to meet the eye of one, whose soul may yet be troubled, notwithstanding all his stock of science, with the spleen of criticism, and prejudiced jealousy against our sex. Surely such miserable language is this! what had she done? surely she does not round her periods! She had better been at her needle work, or the distaff! Friend, I will spare you all this labor of criticism. I acknowledge my want of literary improvement; but yet I am not willing to ascribe it to want of mental powers, but to the disadvantages attending my education. I have not been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, but like Mary, have been cumbered with much serving. Should I presume to say, that some man of letters has stepped behind the curtain, to guide the novices of my pen, I shall positively deny, and subjoin with the Author of the "Gleaner," "My nearest friend is totally ignorant of his performance, and is an utter stranger to every line, till he may see it from the press."

F I N I S.