

T. S. ARTHUR, EsQ.,

DEAR SIR—I have felt a strong desire since reading the conclusion of “Ruling a Wife” to give you a good scolding—but partly from a fear that you would not bear my lecture with a very good grace, and partly from want of time to devote to getting up a suitable one, I have forbore troubling you with the thoughts which have filled my head, and which have been poured forth in words not very flattering to you, in the ears of those to whom I have shown the story. But the ghost of that desire still haunts me, and as I have promised a friend that I would send for a copy of the Home Gazette for her, I cannot resist the inclination while writing to you in her behalf, to give you a severe reprimand for the which you treated poor Mrs. Lane, and her the sex at large.

I was pleased with the commencement story, and hoped that in you we poor 'weak sels' had found one who would sympathize in our troubles, and nobly defend us when pressed. But alas! you have only shown we are weak and helpless—incapable of taking care of ourselves or keeping out of harm's way. No matter to how bad a man a woman may be tied—no matter to how much insult and she may be subjected—no matter if her high spirit be crushed, and her feelings and opinions treated with indifference and scorn, no matter if he who won her young heart with promises of undying love be transformed into a demon—an object of disgust and loathing—Mr. Arthur has shown us that it is useless for her to think of freeing herself from the shackles which are weighing her in the dust, and from the corroding sorrow which in gnawing at her heart strings. He has warned her that should she attempt it, she will fall into snares and dangers from which she is powerless to extricate herself, and which will speedily cause her to repent the step, and sigh to return; but from which there is no escape, till this same cruel lord from whom she has fled comes to her rescue.

Now Mr. Arthur, this is too bad, and I wish the women would raise such a buzz about your ears, as would cause you to repent of the great wrong done them, and compel you to speedily retract the injurious imputations cast upon them I believe, sir, that any woman high souled enough to take the step which Mrs. Lane did, would be capable of taking care of herself and keeping her character unspotted. I believe there are thousands of wronged and degraded women, who, if they would throw off the yoke that binds them would show to the world that it was only while enslaved that they were incapable of self protection, but that when freed they could provide for themselves, meet dangers, resist temptations, bid defiance to the libertine, or, if insulted, revenge the insult.

I am at a loss to determine what object you had in view, when writing that story. If it was really to show up overbearing, lordly husbands— if you approve of a woman standing on the defensive, and maintaining her position when she knows she is right, as did 'Mrs. Lane'—then why subject poor Mrs. L. to so many trials when she fled from the insolence of her husband? If you wish to give a poor, caged bird freedom from the cruelty of him who confines it, pray don't clip its wings, so that instead of soaring aloft, it will fall into the claws of some hungry cat! Why did you not let “Mrs. Lane” show that she was equal to the emergency in which you placed her? Why not let her rise superior to so dependant, so *degrading* a position? Why not let her seek, and find, some honorable employment, where, if but for a day, she might support herself and child by her own independent exertions?— Then, when her repentant husband sought her, she would not

have been humbled by the thought that hereafter, let his treatment be what it might, he had good reason to know that she would submit, rather than again subject herself to such painful trials.

If, on the other hand your design was to teach woman that she is inferior, and that it is her duty to yield in all cases to her self-constituted lord and master, even though he be ignorant and brutalized—then you have accomplished your purpose.

I cannot think, however, that this is the lesson you wished to teach. Many things in the story, and the impressions I had previously formed of your kindly, generous nature forbid my arriving at such a conclusion. And yet—what shall we think? Indeed, Mr. Arthur, instead of elevating the character of woman, and teaching her to respect herself, you have humbled her in her own eyes, and those of the world, and caused her to blush with shame and indignation, that she – man's companion and equal—should be so weak and dependant.

much I have felt impelled to say in be my sex. And will you not acknowledge as just, and promise to make amends for the wrongs done us? If you will, promise on my part, that you shall be re into favor again, and the past be forgotten. presses, and I must close; which I do in the hope that you have listened to my lecture with ho but kindly feelings towards the writer.

Respectfully yours,

AMELIA BLOOMER.

Mr. Arthur favored us with an answer to the above, in which he declined publishing our letter, as it might lead to controversy on the subject of “Woman's Rights.” As his letter was marked “*private*”, we are not at liberty to lay it before our readers, but they can gather some of the writer's ideas from the following, which we sent him in reply:

SENECA FALLS, Oct. 13, 1850.

Mr. ARTHUR:—

It was with no little surprise that I received and read yours of the 11th inst. I did not press the publication of my letter upon you, and if you chose to decline it, all that was necessary was to say so in your paper. But as you have taken the trouble of informing me by letter of your decision, I feel impelled to reply.

You address me as *Miss*, and from this I conclude you think me an *old maid*, who, disappointed in securing to herself one of the “lords of creation,” has taken a dislike to the whole sex.— In this you are greatly mistaken. I have been more than ten years married, though the *honey moon* has not yet passed. I claim that I have he of the very best of husbands, yet I should be loth to acknowledge him as my superior. It is my pleasure to comply with his wishes in all things consistent, and reasonable; and I hold that he is just as much bound to listen to and obey my wishes, as I his—and in this, I am happy to say, we do not disagree. Should he attempt to “*rule*”, I cannot say what the result would be. Perhaps I should take the same course as did your “Mrs. Lane,” and leave him to rule the house without me—in which case I have no doubt I could take

care of myself, and keep aloof from houses of prostitution. But as I have as yet seen no cause for such a step, I have not given the subject much consideration.

Really, Mr. Arthur, you have made my half serious, half-playful letter, a more serious matter than I supposed. You have put a different construction upon it than was intended, by making it a question of "woman's rights!" Surely, I said nothing of "woman's rights!" nothing that would lead to controversy; and if this was your real objection to publishing my letter, your fears were groundless. I insist upon it that you wronged the sex by subjecting "Mrs. Lane" to such trials, I think a woman should exercise great forbearance, and put up with many things hard to endure, before resorting to the extreme step of separation; yet I believe there is a point beyond which endurance ceases to be a virtue, and when it is both her right and duty to seek safety and peace in such a step. But, as I said before, no matter how rough and thorny her pathway—no matter what indignities are put upon her, you have, in that story, taught her that she must bear all in silence, even though it kill her, rather than attempt to free herself; for should she do so, she will meet with still greater trials from which she is powerless to extricate herself.

I have too good an opinion of my sex to admit that they are such weak, helpless creatures, or to teach them any such ideas. Much rather would I rouse them from their dependant, inferior position, and teach them to rely more upon themselves and less upon man; so that when called upon, as many of them are, and ever will be, to battle alone with the rough things of this world, they may go forth with confidence in their own yers of coping successfully with every obstacle with courage to meet whatever dangers ties may lie in their way. The more you impress this upon her mind, the more you show her that she is man's equal, and not his slave, so much the more you do to elevate woman to her true position. The present distinctions between the sexes have been made by man, and not by God. Man has degraded woman from the high position in which she was placed, as his companion and equal, and made of her a slave to be bought and sold at his pleasure. He has brought the Bible to prove that he is her lord and master, and taught her that resistance to his authority is resisting God's will. I deny that the Bible teaches any such doctrine. God made them different in sex, but equal in intellect—and gave them equal dominion. You deny that they are "intellectually equal." As a whole, I admit that at present they are not; though I think there have been individual cases where woman's equality cannot be denied. But at her creation no difference existed. It is the fault of education, that she is intellectually inferior. Give her the same advantages as men—throw open the doors of our colleges, and schools of science, and bid her enter—teach her that she was created for a higher purpose than to be a mere parlor ornament, or plaything for man—show her that you regard her as an equal, and that her opinions are entitled to consideration, in short, treat her as an intelligent, accountable being, and when all this has been done. then, if she prove herself not man's equal in intellect, I will yield the point and admit her inferiority. It is unjust to condemn her as inferior, when we consider the different education she has received, and the estimation in which she has ever been held, both in barbarous and civilized countries.

I had no idea of arguing with you the vexed question of 'woman's rights,' nor do I believe the publication of my letter would have called forth any controversy on that subject. All I expected was a few remarks in self defence from you.— The object of the letter was to counteract the impression given in your story, that without man's protection woman is incapable of taking care of herself—an impression greatly injurious to her. *You* do not think it so. Well I am sorry for it,

inasmuch as many women have no such protection to rely upon, and are compelled, even though danger lies in the way, to depend upon their own efforts for subsistence for themselves and little ones. We are, by the laws and customs of society, rendered dependant and helpless enough at best; but it is both painful and mortifying to see our helplessness shown up to the world in such colors, and by such a writer as yourself. If instead of leading "Mrs. Lane" into such difficulties after she left her husband, you had allowed her to hire out as a *servant*—if nothing better presented itself—you would have done better justice to woman, set her a better example and more truly drawn her real character. But oh! the frightening her with that house of prostitution!!

I think no candid reader will deny the justness of my article, or for a moment think it will admit of controversy. I found no fault with the story —claimed no rights for its heroine, except on one single point. You seem in your letter, to be replying more to the 'opinions set forth in the Lily,' and giving me a lesson as to my duty, than answering my objections to your story. Whatever rights I may advocate for my sex in the Lily, has nothing to do with my opinion on the points referred to. Others who have said nothing, and thought as little, on the subject of woman's rights, have expressed the same opinion as myself in regard to the conclusion of the story.

I have failed to discover what connexion there is between the opinions expressed in my article, and your ideas of what constitutes 'a truly effective man.' I am very happy however, to learn your views, and now that I understand you better, I promise you I will send you no more scolding letters.

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Respectfully yours,

AMELIA BLOOMER.

We have not room for further remark on the subject of the above, though there is much that we would say. We care not what the name, or how popular the writer, who holds up the weakness of woman to public view, so long as we have a pen to write, or a voice to speak, we shall defend our sex from such libelous imputations.— Woman has too long been kept in awe, and her powers of mind and body cramped and fettered by the false ideas in regard to her sphere, and her duty, which man has heretofore so successfully impressed upon the public mind. It is time she, herself, arouse, and teach him another lesson.