

In almost every nation, both of the new and old world, and even among the Hottentots, property is inherited by the male descendants alone; it is only in Europe that one has departed from this. That the property which men have with difficulty acquired by long-continued struggling and hard work should afterwards come into the hands of women, who, in their want of reason, either squander it within a short time or otherwise waste it, is an injustice as great as it is common, and it should be prevented by limiting the right of women to inherit. It seems to me that it would be a better arrangement if women, be they widows or daughters, only inherited the money for life secured by mortgage, but not the property itself or the capital, unless there lacked male descendants. It is men who make the money, and not women; therefore women are neither justified in having unconditional possession of it nor capable of administering it. Women should never have the free disposition of wealth, strictly so-called, which they may inherit, such as capital, houses, and estates. They need a guardian always; therefore they should not have the guardianship of their children under any circumstances whatever. The vanity of women, even if it should not be greater than that of men, has this evil in it, that it is directed on material things--that is to say, on their personal beauty and then on tinsel, pomp, and show. This is why they are in their right element in society. This it is which makes them inclined to be _extravagant_, especially since they possess little reasoning power. Accordingly, an ancient writer says, "Men's vanity, on the other hand, is often directed on non-material advantages, such as intellect, learning, courage, and the like. Aristotle explains in the

Politics[11] the great disadvantages which the Spartans brought upon themselves by granting too much to their women, by allowing them the right of inheritance and dowry, and a great amount of freedom; and how this contributed greatly to the fall of Sparta. May it not be that the influence of women in France, which has been increasing since Louis XIII.'s time, was to blame for that gradual corruption of the court and government which led to the first Revolution, of which all subsequent disturbances have been the result? In any case, the false position of the female sex, so conspicuously exposed by the existence of the "lady," is a fundamental defect in our social condition, and this defect, proceeding from the very heart of it, must extend its harmful influence in every direction. That woman is by nature intended to obey is shown by the fact that every woman who is placed in the unnatural position of absolute independence at once attaches herself to some kind of man, by whom she is controlled and governed; this is because she requires a master. If she, is young, the man is a lover; if she is old, a priest.