

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the world saw an astonishing development of the social influence of women. It was in France principally that the social influence of women was developed to the highest form. The Salon under French women of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries became not only a center for social intercourse but a place particularly of intellectual stimulus and of great political influence. Some of the most famous women of these two centuries were the Salon leaders. A new place was really developed for women in this period, a new set of opportunities and duties. Henceforward society expected women not only to be the mother, the head of the family, the dispenser of charity and of relief but the director and inspirer of the highest forms of social intercourse and it is this set of duties developed in different countries and through so long a period of time which we have inherited. It is in the fulfillment of these duties that we find our state place. ~~The doing of them or not is not~~ of choice with us. It is what society demands of us and unless we fulfill these duties, we fail to discharge our full obligation. It seems to me most regrettable that women fail to grasp the full significance of these tasks which the ages have worked out for her. They are fixed upon us however inevitable, unescapable, fixed upon us just as military duties, government duties, the duty of providing for a family is fixed upon man. I don't believe that any woman who seriously examines the constitution of society can escape the conclusion that whether she likes it or not, these are the duties which are demanded of her. The question ~~is~~ ^{seems then to me to be} becomes twofold; first, do we need the ballot to discharge these duties?

Now what is the relation of the suffrage to these duties