

## Women in Men's Clothes.

The papers have all recorded the case of Mrs. Dr. Walker who claimed the right to put on male attire and thus perambulate the streets at the risk of drawing crowds and subjecting the police to great difficulty and so many delicate and troublesome duties, that they arrested her as the real cause of the obstruction of the highways. Mrs. Dr. Walker appears to be perfectly respectable, and she exerted her talents as a physician in the army during the late rebellion. She talks volubly, must be rather fond of notoriety, but is very sensible, indeed quite strong-minded and can be indignant. But there is nothing light or disreputable about the case in any way, and as a matter of conscientious duty and right, she claims to dress in a sack coat and pants, and that she shall not be molested for so doing in any way, either by the crowd, the policeman, or the magistrate. Has she a right to make this claim? It is true her dress is not so strictly masculine as absolutely to conceal her sex. The white turnover collar fastened on the throat was such as a lady might have worn. In fact, the dress was a sort of hermaphrodite affair, making it not at all difficult for the spectators to feel quite certain that it was a woman before them, a woman who was not trying to conceal her sex, but simply one who claimed the right to don male attire to any extent she chose.

The magistrate seems to have thought so too, for after a thorough investigation he allowed her to go, and without reprimanding the policeman for the past, appeared rather to warn him in future to leave Mrs. Dr. Walker free from molestation, and to dress as she may choose. The point discussed appears to be whether a woman has the right to dress in man's apparel if she appears to mean no harm to any body, and the magistrate seems to have decided it in her favor, throwing the burden of proving evil on the accuser. There is a passage in the laws of Moses on this subject, which may at least be brought forward as showing that from the earliest stages of civilization to the present time a different view has prevailed: "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment, for all that do so are an abomination unto the Lord thy God." The public generally think as the policeman did, that for a woman to walk the streets dressed in male attire, is an offense against public manners and morals, now. Not that the laws of Moses are in any way binding necessarily upon us, but because they are among the most generally recognized expressions of public morality extant, having formed the basis of our institutions as modified by Christianity, and thus indicate to us that great law of social usages which is essential to human welfare, the great code of natural and universal morality.

While we have no doubt that this female doctor may be respectable, and not mean any harm, every sensible woman will see that any dress which can draw together obstructing crowds, is unbecoming to a female. All that tends to confound the sexes must be favorable to immorality, and society has and must have the power to protect itself from unseemly conduct, where it becomes injurious to the peace, and where all history shows that it leads to much that is evil. Ladies may change their fashions as they please in other respects, but all that tends to confound the apparel of men and women, must be foolish and wrong.—*Philadelphia Ledger.*