
EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

ADELE ORBPAZ.

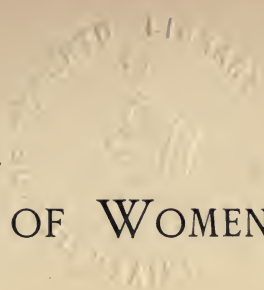




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THE
EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN
AND
ITS PROBABLE CONSEQUENCES

BY
ADELE CREPAZ

Tr. by Ellis Wright (pseud. of Mrs. Ellen Waugh)
WITH A LETTER TO THE AUTHORESS BY
THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.



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LONDON
SWAN SONNENSCHNEIN & CO.
NEW YORK: CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1893

10 DOWNING STREET,
WHITEHALL.

Oct. 3, '92.

MADAM,

I recently found that I had had the honour to receive, possibly from yourself, your tract on the *Frauen-Emancipation*. The German type is somewhat trying to my failing eye-sight, but I could not resist at once reading it. And, having read it, I cannot resist offering you more than a merely formal acknowledgment. And this is not merely because my mind inclines strongly to agree in your foundation-arguments: but because, apart from mere concurrence in this or that special remark, it seems to me by far the most comprehensive, luminous and penetrating work on this question that I have yet met with. My great grief is this, speaking for my own country only: that, while the subject is alike vast and profound, it is commonly treated in the slightest and most superficial, as well as sometimes in

the most passionate manner. In such a region it is far better, as between opposite risks, to postpone a right measure than to commit ourselves to a wrong one. To save us from this danger what we want is *thorough* treatment, and you have given it the most thorough treatment which I have yet seen applied to it. You have opened up many new thoughts in my own mind, but I cannot follow them out. I only wish the treatise had been open to my countrymen and countrywomen in their own tongue.

I remain, Madam,

With high consideration,

Your faithful servant,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

P.S.—For this as well as for other subjects, I deeply regret the death of J. S. Mill: he had perhaps the most *open* mind of his generation.

* * * *This Letter is published by special permission of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.*

TRANSLATOR'S
PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

IN order to avoid the possibility of misconception on the part of English readers of the following essay, it seems well to point out that, although written principally with a view to considering the movement in its effects upon Germany and Austro-Hungary, the authoress has carefully studied and taken into account the conditions existing in other countries of Europe. Whilst, however, acknowledging most fully the benefit accruing to the women of Great Britain from increased facilities for self-support, it is against their claim to *equal political and social rights with men* that Frau Crepaz would earnestly protest, convinced that therein lies much danger to the welfare of humanity.

The recognition accorded to her views by England's Prime Minister is some indication that they are not without supporters in this country.

ELLIS WRIGHT.

LONDON, *January* 1893.

THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN.



It is no light task, at the present juncture, to discuss the dangers of a movement of which the fruitful seeds are rapidly spreading throughout the whole world.

A new era of justice and humanity seems about to dawn upon mankind, and with it the morning glow of promise of freedom from narrowing restraints and prejudices. In every quarter of the world the banner of "Women's Rights" is being waved, the movement, taking ever deeper

and deeper root in the Western Hemisphere, penetrating even to the remote East, until the tranquil life of the Hindoo woman is stirred with its vibration. On all sides we witness spirited women gathering round the standard, attesting by their energy and ability that they are worthy representatives of their views. Furthered and supported by men of mark, the question of the Emancipation of Women has attained to results which some fifty years ago would have been looked upon as simply impossible; indeed those results are now reaching far beyond their primary intention, they are shooting beyond the goal. While, however, these successes are being welcomed by thousands and thousands of the sex with acclamation, and fresh exertions are being made to exact new rights, it is well to

pause a while, as by a sign-post set up to tell the way-farer the road he has come and whither it leads. The torrent rushes unhindered from the steep mountain heights to the valley beneath—who may stem its course? A great movement spreads ever wider and wider—who shall bid it stop? It is beyond the power of the individual. Perhaps some great event of universal import may bring about a truce, perhaps the coming century may bring its solution to the much-vexed question, perhaps women themselves, warned by hard-won experience, may be willing to desist from wresting those rights which, while they hold out to them freedom and independence, turn them from what ensures not only their own happiness and well-being, but also from that upon which the welfare of the whole

human race is grounded. To point this out is the object of this treatise.

The emancipation of women, their deliverance from early prejudices and unnatural trammels, was a necessity which the development of culture and the altered condition of industrial relations was bound, by degrees, to bring about. The progress resulting from it, conducing to the well-being of thousands, cannot be denied, and demands the fullest recognition. It has opened up new possibilities of employment to women, and by thus relieving them from the burden of empty conventional prejudices, has given work to thousands of willing hands, and afforded scope for much latent intellectual power. Work, which in former times was looked upon as a degradation to ladies of position, is

now elevated to a moral power, and the gentlewoman in reduced circumstances no longer needs to earn her living with tears of humiliation and in secret. Openly she shows the world that she intends to turn her abilities to good account, and no one dreams of withholding from her the right. The independent callings which have been opened up to women of late shelters them from the humiliation of seeking dependent positions among their more wealthy relatives, or from being forced, for the sake of a home, to the necessity of marrying against their inclinations. So far the emancipation of women has tended to the culture and ennobling of the sex, and must serve to keep it from some errors, and from the consciousness of empty, vapid lives. True, in all ages, there have been remarkable

women who have endeavoured to force the narrow limits of social opinion, but it has remained to the 19th century to bring about the great reformation in the position of women.

The position of its women is the test of a nation's culture. Among all uncivilised races the woman is looked upon as a beast of burden. The Zulu Kaffir only works until he can buy himself a cow and a wife, then they must work for him. The right over the life and death of the wife belongs in most savage races to the husband, who uses his power, as a rule, most arbitrarily. In ancient times the wife was either subject to, or the slave of, her husband. Among the Greeks, the most cultured of all races, the woman had no "position." Shut out from public

life, her place was in her home, and her function in the education of her children—of her boys up to a certain age only. In spite of this we find a considerable number of learned women and philosophers among them, who, with but few exceptions, were reckoned as aliens. Nor was there wanting, from time to time, an endeavour to rouse woman from her intellectual apathy. Aspasia, the gifted wife of Pericles, essayed to exert her influence upon the women of Athens; Plutarch wrote that “women must also receive culture;” Aristotle advocated equal rights in wedlock; and Plato even in his day brought forward the question of Women’s Rights. “Many women,” said he, “are better calculated for certain things than many men, nor is there any depart-

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