

Article

"The Assertion of Women's Rights in Mid-Victorian England"

Kathleen E. McCrone

Historical Papers / Communications historiques, vol. 7, n° 1, 1972, p. 39-53.

Pour citer cet article, utiliser l'information suivante :

URI: <http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/030742ar>

DOI: 10.7202/030742ar

Note : les règles d'écriture des références bibliographiques peuvent varier selon les différents domaines du savoir.

Ce document est protégé par la loi sur le droit d'auteur. L'utilisation des services d'Érudit (y compris la reproduction) est assujettie à sa politique d'utilisation que vous pouvez consulter à l'URI <https://apropos.erudit.org/fr/usagers/politique-dutilisation/>

Érudit est un consortium interuniversitaire sans but lucratif composé de l'Université de Montréal, l'Université Laval et l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Il a pour mission la promotion et la valorisation de la recherche. Érudit offre des services d'édition numérique de documents scientifiques depuis 1998.

Pour communiquer avec les responsables d'Érudit : info@erudit.org

THE ASSERTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN MID-VICTORIAN ENGLAND

KATHLEEN E. McCRONE

University of Windsor

The nineteenth century was an age of movements and causes, a time when people of strong characters and profound convictions felt that they could change society and that they had a mission to do so. Inspired by both humanitarianism and expediency England moved into an era of political, social, and economic reform which began the emancipation of every class and group from the restrictions and disabilities of the past. Among those affected were English women whose place in society was gradually elevated by the multiple demands for change.

In its origins the idea of women's rights was a radical notion which drew its theoretical and intellectual inspiration primarily from the advanced ideas of the Enlightenment and French Revolution¹ (although neither Rousseau nor the Jacobins were sexual egalitarians). Its early nineteenth century devotees in England tended to be radicals, utilitarians, socialists, or unitarians - people like Henry Hunt, Richard Carlile, and William Johnson Fox. However, not until the mid-Victorian era did the question of the emancipation of women arouse any sustained interest, and by then its reputation for subversiveness in regard to established conceptions about property and the distinctions between the classes was undeserved.

While the campaign for women's rights was an integral part of the metamorphosis which gradually transformed England into a liberal democracy, the feminist movement of the 1850's and 1860's was not dedicated to the radical idea that all men and women were created equal. It was distinctly middle-class, and thus permeated by class consciousness. The average mid-Victorian feminist, however "advanced" according to the standards of the day, was proud of her social standing as a respectable middle-class lady, and assiduously avoided deviations from the social norms which might have damaged her personal reputation and that of her cause. She believed in the superiority of her rank, thought primarily of its needs, and patiently emphasized the necessity to amplify woman's role and rights by constitutional means and by self help - terms which the middle class easily understood.²

While its failure to cross the barriers of class is one of the women's movement's most important weaknesses, in its early stages feminism

had to be primarily bourgeois. Although among the working classes the belief in the inferiority of women was as firmly established as in the higher ranks, the lot of the lower-class woman was so harsh and her educational level so low that the emancipation of her sex could mean little or nothing to her. It rarely even occurred to her that she as a woman could do anything substantial enough to improve the conditions of her life and labor. Ambition and liberation could have meaning only to a few wealthy, leisured, aware ladies of the middle class who regarded the restrictive attitudes of their class as essentially "the enemy."³

Fortunately for the advancement of their sex, during the mid-Victorian period a frustrated minority of such women, tormented by the enforced emptiness of their existence and dissatisfied with the sentimentality which was supposed to give their lives sufficient meaning, dared to resist the limitations and injustices which were so prominent a part of their compulsory "protection." By thus asserting their presence as individuals in the outside world they began the movement for sex equality.

The expansion and improvement of the educational opportunities available to women was one of the major interests of the feminist movement because of their crucial bearing on the whole question of women. The first condition of emancipation being that women themselves should be able to demand it, they had to develop self- and sex-awareness through education. As long as women remained ignorant they could not notice their inferior status in sufficient numbers to turn the individual complaints of isolated women into an effective movement. Furthermore, as long as women were poorly educated, critics of their liberation could claim with some justice that they were ill-equipped for broadened vocational and political horizons.⁴

During the first half of the nineteenth century the education of children of all classes and both sexes was notoriously bad, and, in the face of laissez-faire, vested interests, and force of habit, reforms were made with timid slowness. By the 1850's however, the industrial revolution had forced the English to recognize that a reformation in the intellectual training of their people, extending from elementary schools through the universities, was long overdue. The necessity to abolish the barriers which separated boys and girls from genuine education began to emerge from the period's general impulse towards emancipation and reform, and with it emerged the educational branch of the women's movement.

Unfortunately, unlike the agitation for the suffrage or for a single moral standard, the educational movement had no clear cut issue at

stake to invest it with particular appeal. Its supporters were in agreement upon things like the need to de-emphasize "accomplishments," but there was considerable debilitating dissention over coeducation, curricula, standards, and aims.

Unfortunately also, whatever their interests, the educational pioneers demonstrated a very definite element of class bias. Coming as they did almost exclusively from the middle class, they criticized middle-class educational problems, and suggested solutions with a definitely middle-class appeal.⁵ That the education of English children should continue to be directed at their rank and probable destination in life, and that schools should perpetuate class distinctions they accepted categorically.⁶ As Jessie Boucherett, a woman in the forefront of the mid-Victorian women's movement, said, an educational "rule which is perfectly rightly applied to one class, becomes injudicious, and even cruel when extended to all."⁷

The Victorians certainly deplored the ignorance of the masses and took steps to improve lower-class education through the establishment of factory schools, mechanics' institutes, evening programs for adult education, and ultimately, compulsory, free elementary education. But only radicals suggested that the masses and the classes should be educated together in the same subjects for the same ends.⁸

Educational feminists were not particularly troubled by the inadequate schooling of thousands of girls who were not of their rank. After all "among women of the labouring classes education is of comparatively little importance, for health and strength are of more service to the labourer's daughter than knowledge or intelligence."⁹ Thus, they generally aimed

to provide for persons of those classes that exercise the most influence on others, and whose duties in life are the most important, the means of the highest possible cultivation, and the highest development of their talents: believing that such education is the best preparation for their duties.¹⁰

Was it not dangerous to neglect the education of the classes to which poorer people looked for an example, they asked? Was it not more important to educate married women of the higher social classes than the working-class housewife? Were not social differences such as privileges of rank and authority created for the advantage of all?¹¹

This bias in favor of the middle class among educationalists becomes even more obvious when specific mid-century advances are examined. The problem of the governess, for example, was certainly a middle-class problem involving the employment of middle-class women, their lack of education, and their efforts to retain their social

standing. The foundation of Queen's College, London, in 1848 by a number of members of the Committee of the Governesses' Benevolent Institution, including Charles Kingsley and Frederick Denison Maurice, was intended to provide training for middle-class women who intended to become teachers or governesses as well as a good general education to girls of the same class who might have to make their own way in life.

Similarly, most of the good public schools for girls founded during the 1850's catered to the middle and upper ranks of society. Dorothea Beale's select Cheltenham Ladies' College was typical in its exclusive interest in girls from affluent, "respectable" homes and its refusal to admit the daughters of tradespeople. Frances Mary Buss's North London Collegiate School for Ladies, on the other hand, was unusually liberal in that it recognized that a sound education was necessary for children of all ranks, and thus enrolled some girls from the relatively well-off working classes; but its primary interest too was in the educational needs of neglected middle-class girls.¹²

In the 1850's and 1860's, when education finally began to be translated into a state enterprise, a number of royal commissions were appointed to investigate various facets of education. The first to include girls' schools and accept testimony from female educators was the Taunton Commission, formed in 1864, which inspected the boarding, private, and endowed schools patronized by girls from the middle and upper classes. Its report, published in 1868, revealed the superficiality, irregularity, costliness, and general inadequacy of female middle-class education. Influenced by the class distinctions and social norms of their age, however, the commissioners were careful not to be too extreme in their recommendations, so they did not promote the establishment of schools which were sexually or socially mixed.¹³

The movement to open the universities and medical education to women which began in the 1860's was also directed by and to members of the respectable middle classes. Typical was the dedicated Emily Davies, the most prominent personage in the early university campaign. The daughter of a clergyman, she had a restricting and stifling upbringing. Against this she revolted, but she was far from radical. Throughout her long life Miss Davies remained the demure rector's daughter, favoring gradual, peaceful change, conservative towards almost everything that did not affect women.¹⁴ Her activities and writings repeatedly revealed a prejudice in favor of the upper and middle classes.¹⁵

In 1863 Miss Davies persuaded the senate of Cambridge University to allow girls to sit the Cambridge Local Examinations which, since their foundation in 1858, had proved useful in testing and in some cases even raising the standard of middle-class male education. The Local victory encouraged her and her friends to consider the possibility of founding a women's college of the university type to educate gentlewomen who would become schoolmistresses, occupy the leisure time of women of the commercial classes whose responsibility it was to keep up the tone of life in society, and through the development of the hitherto idle female intellect, release a vast amount of energy.¹⁶ The result was the establishment of Hitchin College in 1869, and its relocation four years later as Girton College in formal affiliation with Cambridge University.

At the same time Anne Jemima Clough and an organization of schoolmistresses called the North of England Council for Promoting the Higher Education of Women pointed out to the same university "the great want which is felt by women of the upper and middle classes, particularly by those engaged in teaching, of higher examinations suitable to their own needs."¹⁷ Cambridge's obliging creation of a women's examination in the spring of 1869 led to the building of Newnham Hall in 1875 and its incorporation as a college in 1880.

Notable as the achievements of Miss Davies and Miss Clough were, with effective elementary education for both sexes becoming customary only towards the end of the Victorian era, the arguments in favor of higher education for women had little meaning or appeal beyond a relatively small social group. Nor were they intended to do so. The higher education movement was directed towards a limited number of girls from good families, the sisters of the boys whose fathers could afford to send them up to the universities.

No two aspects of the women's movement were more closely connected than those concerning education and employment. Without a solid education women could qualify for very few jobs, and until the opportunities for female employment increased, there existed a degree of truth in the conservative argument that an extensive education would be wasted on women since they could do nothing with it.

Broadly speaking, the employment of women question involved women of both the working and middle classes. In the short run the industrial revolution enslaved the former in the corporate bondage that was factory life, but it eventually provided them with opportunities to earn independent livings in an ever increasing number of occupations. At the same time machines pushed middle-class women into a wholly domestic sphere and considerably lessened their work therein, while

the dictates of refinement denied them the means to use their leisure creatively. Seeking to emulate the example set by the upper classes, bourgeois Victorian men regarded idle and dependent wives and daughters as evidence of good birth and success in business, and thus kept their womenfolk at home. The strength of this ideal and the degradation which accompanied working for wages, excluded from most remunerative occupations many respectable women who very much wanted or needed to earn an honorable living.¹⁸

About mid-century a few restless and bored women of the leisured classes began to recognize that, however socially inferior, the factory hand earning her own independent living had certain economic advantages, and that she was setting an example that might be of value to the "lady."¹⁹ Encouraged by this example and frustrated by their vocational dilemma, even financially secure young women dared to question marriage as their only legitimate career. They dared, further, to doubt the unnaturalness and ridiculousness of their desire to be independent,²⁰ and began to seek acceptable employment outside their homes.

At the same time, the contrast between the real position of many middle-class women and their so-called "proper sphere," and the absurdity of a matrimonially oriented social organization which made no provision for single, propertyless gentlewomen was revealed by the famous census of 1851. This census exposed the alarming fact that there were more women than men in the population, that within the female sex there were large numbers of spinsters and widows, and that for those middle-class women who were dependent on their own resources, there were few jobs available.

Notable for their responsiveness to the stern logic of statistics, during the next few years the Victorian middle class in general and women's rightists in particular undertook a vigorous search for cures to the redundancy of those middle-class women of limited means who had to face the world alone.

As with its educational counterpart, the economic branch of the women's movement was distinctly middle-class. The small number of advanced spirits who formed the vanguard of economic feminism — women like Bessie Rayner Parkes, Barbara Leigh Smith, Jessie Boucherett, and Emily Faithfull — all came from the middle ranks. Predictably, they directed their efforts against genteel destitution because, as Miss Parkes said:

It may reasonably be urged that penniless women in the upper classes, though comparatively few in number, are more important than the mass of

their working fellow country-women, because of their superior influence on the future.²¹

It was "a fashion with women of the better ranks to despise women of the working class engaged in industry, and especially women engaged in factory work,"²² and while most feminists were perhaps not quite that hard on the work woman of humbler rank, certainly they had little knowledge of the conditions under which she lived and labored. Humanitarians, not women's rightists, tried to obtain legal protection for the woman worker. In their ignorance of industrial organization and with an exaggerated conception of personal liberty, many feminists, including John Stuart Mill, opposed the restriction of female labor by legislation on the grounds that by treating women like children unable to take care of themselves and without the right to dispose of their own working capacity as they saw fit, it would strengthen the system of tutelage which limited women's activities, and thus delay their emancipation as independent social units.²³ Such feminists "made a serious error in transferring their own grievances to a class about whose troubles they knew little and understood less."²⁴

According to the class-oriented women's rightists, "the choice of the occupation to be followed must mainly depend on the social position and...education of each individual."²⁵ To quote Emily Faithfull, she had no patience with the "miserable paltry pride which teaches women to look down upon all paid work," but she had "considerable sympathy for those whose sense of the fitness of things is strong enough to wish their work to correspond in some degree with their education and social position."²⁶

In 1859 Miss Parkes, Miss Smith, and Miss Boucherett shrewdly exploited the opportunities presented by the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science to form an affiliated Society for the Employment of Women. The employment society had only a slight interest in bettering the conditions of domestic servants and factory hands. Its main concern was the half-educated daughters of poor business and professional men who were born and bred ladies and who struggled to find work to which there would be attached no social stigma. Such women the society encouraged to look beyond governessing and seamstressing (the occupations to which impoverished middle-class women most frequently resorted), and to seek training and entry into new and expanding fields such as book-keeping, law-copying, and printing.²⁷

The efforts of the economic pioneers, however class-oriented, together with the concurrent expansion of employment opportunities and the demand for middle-class female laborers, contributed to a

gradual but perceptible redefinition of woman's place in society. During the mid-Victorian era the emergence of the middle-class working woman was one of the most important manifestations of female advancement, for economic independence constituted a necessary precondition for the equality of women in all areas of life.

Simultaneously with women's demands for extended educational and employment opportunities and for a generally broadened sphere came demands for their political emancipation. Not surprisingly, the question of the vote became the most radical and spectacular phase of the whole women's movement, the aspect of emancipation which aroused the greatest controversy and strongest feelings.

During the early nineteenth century the suggestion that women should vote was raised occasionally by radicals, but the voice of women was little heard in public life. Disinterest, insufficient knowledge or experience, and stern social conventions which forbade respectable women being conspicuous long deterred them from taking an active interest in politics, and kept them safely at home. A number of middle-class women did serve something of a political apprenticeship in the 1840's working alongside their menfolk in the struggle for the repeal by the corn laws.²⁹ But after the free trade victory in 1846 there was no rush by the ladies of the Anti-Corn Law League to organize to fight for the vote. For nearly twenty more years interest in attaining political rights by and for women remained sporadic.

By the early 1860's however, the whole political scene in England was changing. Middle-class men had established their place in the political order which made the question of votes for women of the same class appear at least slightly more practical. A reformation in the attitudes of women was giving birth to an infant women's movement. And after years in limbo parliamentary reform was again becoming a national issue. At least partly because of the scent of reform and change in the air, an organized women's suffrage movement came into being.

Although women of all classes signed the suffrage petitions of the 1860's, there is little evidence that many working-class women were at all interested in the franchise.³⁰ As usual only their middle-class sisters had the ambition, determination, and time for the endless effort that the suffrage battle demanded. Thus, predictably, from its inception the women's suffrage movement was middle-class in membership and orientation.

Organization was the key to suffragist activities, and its national extent was what made the fight for the vote different from and superior to other branches of the women's movement. This organization grew

out of discussions first held in the drawing rooms of comfortable homes and attended by enterprising ladies like Barbara Leigh Smith and Emily Davies who were interested in a wholesale readjustment of the relations between the sexes. It was members of a Kensington Ladies' Discussion Society who formed the first women's suffrage committee in 1866 to collect signatures for a great parliamentary petition, and who reorganized a year later as the London National Society for Women's Suffrage. By the end of 1868 similar organizations had been formed in Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, and Edinburgh.

The male and female members of these societies came almost exclusively from the middle class and were very concerned with propriety. Conscious of the importance of not offending public opinion through outrageous behavior, they took great pains to effect respectable deportment. The suffrage societies did defy convention to the extent that they rejected the long-standing prohibition against women speaking in public. But the gatherings which the lady suffragists addressed were modelled closely on the ordinary English political meeting which helped to identify the cause of women's suffrage with the practical politics of the day. And to confound the conservative opinion that public activity was unsexing, they took care, like the distinguished and genteel Millicent Garrett Fawcett, to appear as models of delicacy and femininity as they sat primly and often nervously on public platforms.

While they sympathized with working-class women, the middle-class suffragists accepted the class distinctions of their time and looked down on their social inferiors with snobbish superiority.³¹ They were no more democratic than the majority of their male contemporaries, so they demonstrated little desire that all women regardless of circumstances be enfranchised. The political rightists were well aware of the danger to their cause of extremist proposals and the impracticality of asking for adult suffrage for women before it applied to men. Furthermore, even had universal suffrage not been so radical an idea during the 1860's few of the pioneer suffragists would have supported it. Upsetting the existing order of things was not their intention. The issue as they saw it was one of sex equality, not class equality. They wanted to destroy the sexual barriers to the parliamentary franchise, not see the vote extended to all.³²

The basic arguments for the political emancipation of women rested on the traditional and class-oriented idea that the vote went with property, and that property, not the individual, was the true political unit. John Stuart Mill's step-daughter, Helen Taylor, who was a typical suffragist, rejected a universal franchise on the grounds that

all men were not born free and equal and what counted politically was property.³³ On women's behalf she argued that since the law supposed that the person who possessed property was best able to protect it, propertied women should be able to vote. "Why," she asked,

when they possess the necessary property, are women, alone among the citizens of full age and sane mind, unconvicted of crime, disabled by a merely personal circumstance (that of sex) from exercising a right attached by our institutions to property and not to persons?³⁴

Thus the suffrage movement advocated the vote only for those women who possessed the required property qualifications — women who were rate-paying householders. After considerable soul-searching, it was even decided to exclude married women since the law ordained that upon marriage a woman's property passed to her husband, and therefore few would qualify.³⁵

John Stuart Mill, the most famous of all the mid-Victorian suffragists, personally believed in a totally universal franchise;³⁶ but for the sake of expediency, when he moved an amendment to the Representation of the People Bill on May 20, 1867 which would have substituted the word "person" for "man" in the bill's wording, he too asked simply that justice be done to 300,000 - 400,000 single women who conducted business, owned property, and paid taxes.³⁷

Speaking in support of his motion Mr. Mill calmly and rationally destroyed the arguments against votes for women. Sustained by memories of the intellectual companionship that had characterized his own marriage, he denied the existence of a duality of interests between the sexes. There was no reason, he said, why domestic occupations should be incompatible with an interest in national affairs for the vast majority of male voters were occupied in non-political business most of the time, yet it was never argued that the few hours they spent voting caused them to neglect their businesses or professions. Similarly invalid, Mill insisted, were the arguments that women did not wish to be enfranchised and that therefore they should continue to be excluded, and that they did not need direct power because they already had considerable indirect power through their influence on their male relatives and friends who represented their interests sufficiently well. The care taken of women's interests by the men who represented them could hardly be adequate when women were in so disadvantageous a position legally, educationally, and economically.³⁸

Mill realized only too well that the enfranchisement of women was regarded by the mass of Englishmen as an absurd and even ludicrous novelty which, like many new ideas that were opposed to precon-

ceived notions, deserved only to be laughed at and ridiculed.³⁹ Therefore, he was uncertain whether his motion would obtain more than a few stray votes in the House of Commons. His speech, however, was listened to with interest and curiosity, and it brought the members of parliament face to face with the implications of active feminism for the first time. Although Mill's critics mustered 196 votes to soundly defeat it,

when, after a debate in which the speakers on the contrary side were conspicuous by their feebleness, and the votes recorded in favour of the motion amounted to seventy-three -- made up by pairs and letters to about eighty-six -- the surprise was general, and the encouragement great.⁴⁰

Without Mill's amendment the second reform bill became law in 1867, increasing the electorate by about 1,000,000 men, many of whom were urban workers. The enfranchisement of working-class men offended the class consciousness of many suffragists who hence began to argue that it was anomalous, totally unfair, and even ridiculous to have given the poor and the ignorant — the very dregs of society — the vote, while the wealthy, able and virtuous female relatives of respectable men continued to be excluded.⁴¹ After 1867 also, some "liberal" political rightists were able to give lip service to the acceptability of female voters from among the urban working population with perfect confidence that almost none would qualify.

At no time during the nineteenth century were the suffragists more than a minority or was their cause an obtrusive and serious issue in national public affairs. Nor could it be otherwise until the question of the equality of men as individuals had been settled, and until changes had occurred in women's educational, economic, and legal position. Votes for women could not become a popular idea until people of all classes and both sexes, in numbers sufficient to turn the suffrage movement from something peculiar into something comprehensive, became convinced that women were distressed and needed a voice in government to remedy that distress. Thus, it was not until December 1918 that, at the age of eighty-eight, Emily Davies could walk to a poll to cast a parliamentary vote.

By 1870 despite some encouraging signs of advancement the influence of feminism had made itself felt only within a small circle of opinion. The convictions that woman's weakness and her complete dependence on man were inherent and inevitable conditions and that things like the rights of women were best left alone remained widespread among members of both sexes. It is inaccurate to speak of a women's movement until the mid-Victorian era and even then, although the number of activists and sympathizers increased, coordinated efforts

were still irregular and unscientific.⁴² Except in the fight for the vote there was no definite organization with a starting date and chosen leaders.

Another weakness in the women's movement was the diversity of aims and opinions among supporters of "the cause", and their circumscription by class bias. Feminism was full of that typically Victorian paradox, the progressive conservative. A good many women's rightists were inconsistent, unsure of themselves, and uncertain how far they should go. They frequently approved of one goal while opposing another or even shifting ground, and they were often afraid to join several movements for fear of uniting the opposition.

On the surface female emancipation was an ideology that should have attracted all women. In fact, however, its appeal and scope were much more limited than many of its advocates would have admitted. Originally feminism was intellectual and radical, and even as it moderated it remained part of the liberal trend which underlay many of the movements for reform during the nineteenth century. However, the mid-Victorian women's movement was far from being democratic and proletarian. It was part of the attempt of a rising bourgeoisie to attain political power and social ascendancy. Within it, class feeling was marked, and real friendships and a sense of common grievance among women of very different social standings were rare. Although the feminists often claimed to speak in the name of all women, in reality their efforts and arguments were infrequently directed towards the good of womankind as a whole. The idea that working-class women had the same right to self-development as those of the higher ranks was foreign to them. Civil, political, and human rights were demanded only for a limited segment of society. Even Josephine Butler's crusade against prostitution and the state regulation of vice by the Contagious Diseases Acts, although it departed from the norm in the women's movement by concentrating on working-class instead of middle-class women, was an effort to impose the moral standards of the middle on the lower ranks. Despite Mrs. Butler's talk about justice, equality, and liberty for all, despite the relative emancipation of her supporters, her battle was charitable rather than egalitarian.⁴³

The failure of most mid-Victorian feminists to see beyond the barriers of class is not surprising in view of their social background. But their failure to acknowledge or reconcile the inherently conservative, class-structured content of the women's movement with its liberal exterior and ideology helps to explain the limitations of its activities and successes. To really triumph the women's movement needed an issue which virtually all women would accept as their

own, which would unite the lady and the factory hand, and which would capture the sympathy of national public opinion.⁴⁴ But while the middle-class woman wanted individual rights and more opportunities, her working-class contemporary was much more interested in obtaining higher wages and better treatment. Only the very perceptive recognized that the cause of both was one and the same — a rise in the whole status of women.

The emancipation of English women was a distinctly evolutionary process which was carried through step by step, slowly, deliberately, and usually quietly. In the early Victorian period feminism was little more than a vague restlessness, and by mid-century only the first mutterings of what was eventually to become something of a revolution were heard. However, during the mid-Victorian period the coincidence in time and the convergence in direction of a number of distinct movements affecting the status of women were unmistakable signs of what was to come in the future.

NOTES

¹ Theodore Stanton (ed.), *The Woman Question in Europe* (London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1884), p. 2: quoting Millicent Garrett Fawcett.

² Eugenia M. Palmegiano, "Feminist Propaganda in the 1850's and 1860's" (unpublished paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, December 30, 1970), p. 2.

³ Constance Rover, *Love, Morals and the Feminists* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 52.

⁴ Josephine Butler, *The Education and Employment of Women* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1868), p. 10.

⁵ Examples of this in the literature of the movement are numerous. The following references are typical. Millicent Garrett Fawcett, "The Education of Women of the Middle and Upper Classes," *Macmillan's Magazine*, XVII (April, 1868), 513-514; "Female Education," *Quarterly Review*, CXIX (April, 1866), 265-266; Maria G. Grey and Emily Shirreff, *Thoughts on Self-Culture* (London: Hope and Co., 1854), pp. 36-40; National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, *Transactions*, 1865 (London: 1866), p. 274.

⁶ Ellis A. Davidson, *The Girl of the Period: A Plea for the Education of Females* (London: 1869), p. 14; Emily Faithfull, *Woman's Work with special reference to Industrial Employment* (London: 1871), p. 13; Anna Brownell Jameson, *The Communion of Labour* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1856), pp. 109-115.

⁷ Jessie Boucherett, *Remarks on the Obstacles to the more general Employment of Women and on the means of removing them* (London: 1860), p. 6.

⁸ "On Female Education," *Quarterly Review*, CXXXVI (April, 1869), 247.

⁹ Anonymous, *Ancient Charities and Endowed Schools* (London, 1865), p. 7.

¹⁰ NAPSS, *Transactions*, 1867, p. 377.

52 HISTORICAL PAPERS 1972 COMMUNICATIONS HISTORIQUES

¹¹ Emily Davies, *The Higher Education of Women* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1866), p. 74; "National Education," *St. James' Magazine*, V (August, 1862), 104.

¹² Josephine Kamm, *How Different From Us* (London: John Lane, 1958), p. 47.

¹³ P.W. Musgrave, *Society and Education in England Since 1800* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1968), pp. 38-39; from School's Inquiry Commission Reports, 1868, I, 15-21.

¹⁴ Millicent Garrett Fawcett, *What I Remember* (London: T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1924), p. 40.

¹⁵ Emily Davies, *The Application of Funds to the Education of Girls* (London: 1865), p. 9; Davies, *Higher Education of Women*, p. 74; Emily Davies, *Secondary Instruction as Relating to Girls* (London: William Ridgway, 1864), p. 8.

¹⁶ Butler, *Education and Employment of Women*, p. 10. See also "Mill on the Subjection of Women," *Edinburgh Review*, CXXX (October, 1869), 305, and *Prospectus of the College for Women at Hitchin, Hertfordshire, August, 1869*, p. 4.

¹⁷ Alice Zimmern, *The Renaissance of Girls' Education in England* (London: A.D. Innes and Co. Ltd., 1898), p. 50.

¹⁸ Sarah Ellis, *Education of the Heart* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1869), pp. 18-19; "Feminine Work," *Victoria Magazine*, IX (September, 1867), 407; Maria G. Grey, *Is the Exercise of the Suffrage Unfeminine?* (London: 1870), p. 10; John Duguid Milne, *Industrial and Social Position of Women in the Middle and Lower Ranks* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1857), p. 261; Mary Taylor, *The First Duty of Women* (London: Emily Faithfull, 1870), p. 129; "The Vocations of Women," *Eliza Cook's Journal*, III (May 25, 1850), 59.

¹⁹ Helen Blackburn, *Women's Suffrage* (London, Williams and Norgate, 1902), p. 42; "The Employment of Women," *North British Review*, XXVI (February, 1857), 328; Rhoda Garrett, *The Electoral Disabilities of Women* (Cheltenham: 1872), p. 11; Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (New York: Avon Books, 1969), p. 87; Ivy Pinchbeck, *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution 1750-1850* (London: George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., 1930), pp. 314-316; George Macaulay Trevelyan, *English Social History* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942), p. 487.

²⁰ *The Times* (London), November 2, 1860.

²¹ Bessie Rayner Parkes, *Essays on Woman's Work* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1865), p. 73.

²² Milne, *Industrial and Social Position*, p. 209. See also NAPSS, *Transactions*, 1857, p. 533.

²³ Wanda F. Neff, *Victorian Working Women* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1929), p. 67.

²⁴ B.L. Hutchins and A. Harrison, *A History of Factory Legislation* (London: P.S. King and Son, 1903), p. 184. See also O.R. McGregor, "The Social Position of Women in England, 1850-1912: A Bibliography," *British Journal of Sociology*, VI (March, 1955), 55.

²⁵ Jessie Boucherett, *Hints on Self-Help* (London: 1863), p. 23. See also Boucherett, *Remarks*, p. 4.

²⁶ Faithfull, *Woman's Work*, p. 11.

²⁷ Frances Power Cobbe, *Essays on the Pursuits of Woman* (London: Emily Faithfull, 1863), p. 16.

²⁸ Samuel Bailey, *The Rationale of Political Representation* (London: R. Hunter, 1835); William Thompson, *Appeal of One Half the Human Race, Women, Against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men, to Retain Them in Political, and Thence in*

Civil and Domestic Slavery; in Reply to a Paragraph in Mr. Mill's Celebrated "Article on Government" (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1825). See also Henry Hamilton, *History of the Homeland* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1947), p. 329.

²⁹ Archibald Prentice, *History of the Anti-Corn Law League* (London: W. and F.G. Cash, 1853), I, 170.

³⁰ National Society for Women's Suffrage, London Branch, *Report of a Meeting held in the Hanover Square Rooms, March 26, 1870*, p. 4; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda G. Gage, *History of Woman Suffrage* (Rochester: Susan B. Anthony, 1886), III, 841. Even in the militant pre-World War I period working-class women were not as interested in or involved with the crusade for the vote as were those of the middle classes. See Millett, *Sexual Politics*, p. 84, and Constance Rover, *Women's Suffrage and Party Politics in Britain 1866-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), pp. 16-17.

³¹ Rover, *Women's Suffrage*, p. 35.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 23-25, 70-71. See also Roger Fulford, *Votes for Women* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), p. 70.

³³ Helen Taylor, *The Claims of Englishwomen to the Suffrage Constitutionally Considered* (London: 1867), pp. 6-7, 13-14; reprinted from Helen Taylor, "The Ladies' Petition," *Westminster Review*, LXXXVI (January, 1867).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

³⁵ Frances Power Cobbe, *Why Women Desire the Franchise* (London: 1869), pp. 9-12; Garrett, *Electoral Disabilities*, pp. 21-22; James Thornton Hoskins, *A Few Words on Women's Suffrage* (London: 1870), p. 7; National Society for Women's Suffrage, Edinburgh Branch, *Public Meeting in Queen Street Hall on January 17, 1870*, p. 4; National Society for Women's Suffrage, Manchester Branch, *Annual Reports of the Executive Committee*, 1868, p. 12; Francis William Newman, *A Lecture on Women's Suffrage delivered in the Guildhall, Bath, on January 28, 1870* (Bristol: 1870), pp. 3-4; Barbara Leigh Smith, *Reasons for the Enfranchisement of Women* (London: 1866), pp. 3-9.

³⁶ Hugh S.R. Elliot (ed.), *The Letters of John Stuart Mill* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910), I, 172; letter to Lord Monteagle, March 20, 1853; II, 16-17; letter to Max Kyllman, February 15, 1865.

³⁷ Rover, *Women's Suffrage*, p. 26.

³⁸ Great Britain, 3 *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, CLXXXVII (1867), 817-829.

³⁹ Josephine Kamm, *Rapiers and Battleaxes* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966), p. 129; *The Times* (London), May 21, 1867.

⁴⁰ John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1873), pp. 303-304.

⁴¹ Cobbe, *Why Women Desire the Franchise*, p. 4; Duncan Crow, *The Victorian Woman* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1971), p. 251; Newman, *A Lecture on Woman's Suffrage . . . in Bath*, p. 5; Stanton, *Woman Question in Europe*, p. xvi.

⁴² Bessie Rayner Parkes, *Essays on Woman's Work* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1865), pp. 55-56; Rachel Strachey, *The Cause: A Short History of the Women's Movement in Great Britain* (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1928), p. 64.

⁴³ Rover, *Love, Morals and the Feminists*, p. 52, 81.

⁴⁴ Millett, *Sexual Politics*, p. 73.