

**LADIES AT WORK. PAPERS
ON PAID EMPLOYMENTS
FOR LADIES, PP.1-142**

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Ladies at Work. Papers on Paid Employments for Ladies, pp.1-142 by Various

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LADIES AT WORK.

PAPERS ON PAID EMPLOYMENTS FOR LADIES.

The Monthly 2020.4.

LADIES AT WORK.

PAPERS ON
PAID EMPLOYMENTS FOR LADIES.

BY
EXPERTS IN THE SEVERAL BRANCHES.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

LADY JEUNE.

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LADIES AT WORK.

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INTRODUCTION.

OF all the changes which mark the social revolutions of the nineteenth century none are more remarkable and more far-reaching in their effects than those affecting the position of women. Perhaps we may call them complete so far as they have gone, though in the future we cannot doubt but that their results will be still wider and more revolutionary. As regards the position and influence of women, there is not much left to desire, and whether her power will be materially increased by giving her the franchise, and so putting her on an equality with men, is a question open to much speculation. To an ordinary observer, it can hardly be said that a woman's position is a hard one because that privilege is withheld, for in the most important matters affecting education, training, and choice of professions a woman's field of choice is hardly less limited than that of a man.

Medicine, science, teaching, literature, and art are all open to her, in all of which she has won laurels, while even that most conservative and exclusive of careers, the law, is now being invaded by her ; so that, given capacity and physical strength, a woman's chance of distinction is very

little behind that of her masculine opponents. The volume we have before us is the best proof of this: its comprehensiveness, its thoroughness, and the grasp of subjects it treats of, show how wide and far-reaching are the results of modern life, and training, on educated and intelligent women.

If we compare the life of a modern woman with that of one at the beginning of the century, where can we find a greater contrast? Then, fettered and surrounded with all the safeguards and prejudices of a narrow society, with no future before her, if she remained unmarried, save a life of dull monotony, often accompanied with very straitened means, was it a wonder that existence to her was a dreary wretchedness, obliged constantly as she was to keep up an appearance of gentility under super-human difficulties, because it was a reproach to be poor, and a disgrace to make any attempt to earn her living? And thus her life was passed, till the day when the dark curtain fell on one who, perhaps, had she lived in these later days, would have been a useful and happy member of society. The lives of women and girls in the upper classes were both as uneventful and uninteresting, for if we take the novels of the early parts of the century which treat of English social life, they present as dreary a picture as one can conceive; in which women were shut out and debarred from taking their part or sharing in any way in the intellectual interests and occupations of their husbands or brothers.

The causes which have brought about the change are