

**WE WOMEN AND OUR
AUTHORS; AN ENGLISH
RENDERING FROM THE SECOND
EDITION OF THE GERMAN WORK**

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We Women and Our Authors; An English Rendering from the Second Edition of the German
Work by Laura Marholm Hansson & Hermione Ramsden

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LAURA MARHOLM HANSSON & HERMIONE RAMSDEN




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BY THE SAME AUTHOR AND TRANSLATOR

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
WE WOMEN AND OUR AUTHORS	I
GOTTFRIED KELLER AND WOMEN	23
PAUL HEYSE AND THE INCOMMENSURABLE	61
THE AUTHOR IN A CUL-DE-SAC (IBSEN)	80
THE HIGH PRIEST OF PURITY (BJÖRNSEN)	100
THE WOMEN-HATERS, TOLSTOY AND STRINDBERG:	
I. TOLSTOY	132
II. STRINDBERG	146
MAUPASSANT AND THE "FIN DE SIÈCLE"	
WOMAN	179
BARBRY D'AUREVILLY ON THE MYSTERY OF	
WOMAN	197
HOW DO WE STAND?	212



We Women and our Authors

WE German women are accustomed to look upon ourselves as an appendage to or a part of man. Up till now it has been the chief object and the pride of our existence to subordinate ourselves to him, and to look after his comforts. It is so no longer, or at any rate it is not as common as it used to be. Women have begun to ask: Who am I? and not: Whose am I? which proves that they are conscious of their individuality and wish to live their own lives. At present they are only helpless beginners filled with desires, needs and claims, which they themselves do not understand and which they would rather not admit. Their first longing is for outward independence, and in that they are not even original, as the economic conditions of the middle classes have long since forced women to exert themselves to the utmost in order that they may be self-supporting in part, if not entirely. And they are proud and happy when they have succeeded thus far, they fight for it in public and in private life, in the family, in Associations for Women's Rights, in newspapers, and in books where the movement has advanced the furthest. They fight for the first and rudest

basis of their independence, for the right to maintain themselves, which, while it is the lowest step on the way to freedom, is the one that gives them the first title to the possession and disposal of their own selves. It is by no means an aimless struggle, but it is a sad one, in which the woman only too often forfeits her most precious possession—her womanliness.

But there is something in the background, besides what a woman ventures for the sake of attaining her wishes and advancing her claims. Many women have not yet learned to express it, many consider it their duty to dispute it even to themselves, while some give way to the indistinct longing with fear and hesitation, and only a very few know what it is and welcome it with gladness and with the consciousness that through it their lives are being strengthened, and their souls and bodies beautified. Women have passed through a fresh development and have entered upon a new stage of their inner consciousness.

It was an event which it took the whole of this century to bring about, and which has only now begun to draw attention to itself and its consequences.

One of the causes which brought it into being was due to the authors of this present century.

There has never been a literature so rich and so full of variety as that which has surrounded us women of the present day. Woman has never played such an important part in the literature