

**CONCERNING MEN,  
AND OTHER PAPERS**

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Concerning men, and other papers by Dinah Craik

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**DINAH CRAIK**

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AND OTHER PAPERS**



2000

1st Edition

Craig David Merson (Miles)

CONCERNING MEN

AND OTHER PAPERS

# CONCERNING MEN

AND OTHER PAPERS

BY THE AUTHOR OF

'JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN'

*Donal Maria Mulock  
later Mrs Craik*

**London**

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1888

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These were the last papers Mrs. Craik wrote. She intended to collect and republish them with others that were never written, but only planned.

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## CONCERNING MEN

I HAVE been asked to write a paper giving a woman's opinions upon men; the reason urged for this request being 'that a woman who has for the purposes of literary art analysed the minds of men and women must have reached valuable conclusions as to the mutual limitations of each sex, and its supplementation by the other.'

It may be so. One cannot have written novels for forty years without much study and observation of human character, to say nothing of the inevitable experience which a long life brings. And yet I have hesitated. We all know ourselves better than outsiders do, and I am conscious of having lived, in a

sense, out of the world—a quiet happy domestic existence, which never brought me in contact with really bad men. Consequently, pessimistic or Zolaesque studies of them had no charm for me; and I have shared with many other female writers the accusation that all my men are ‘women’s men,’ *i.e.* men, painted, not as they are, but after the ideal—a woman’s ideal—of what they ought to be. Perhaps we might retort how very little men know of us, and how unlike to real women are the heroines of many male novelists. The difference seems to be, that a woman’s man is generally gifted with impossible virtues, while a man’s woman, if not enchantingly wicked, is often so tame and weak, even silly, like Thackeray’s *Amelia* and a dozen more I could name, that the best of her sex would be ashamed to own her.

Be that as it may, I will not argue the question; I have been asked to say my say,

and I say it, without dogmatism, but also without fear.

It is as well to premise, however, that all my observations and experience of life have confirmed me in one belief, viz. that while, as a rule, the average woman is superior to the average man,—more estimable, lovable—nay, often more capable and reliable,—there are exceptional men nobler than any woman; for the simple reason that the masculine nature is larger and stronger, with wider possibilities for both evil and good.

All thy passions, matched with mine,  
Are like moonlight unto sunlight and as water unto  
wine,

is a truth affirmed by a wise man, which should never be ignored in a woman's judgment of men.

Also, though we find continual exceptions—women as strong as many a man, and men tenderer than most women—still the creed