

1849

## The Authoress

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### Recommended Citation

"The Authoress." *The Collegian* 1, no. 2 (1849).

Available at: <http://scholar.dickinson.edu/collegian/vol1/iss2/5>

*The Collegian* is a literary magazine published by the Belles Lettres and Union Philosophical Societies at Dickinson College in 1849. For more information, please contact [scholar@dickinson.edu](mailto:scholar@dickinson.edu).

They gazed upon the beauty of the scenery ; and admired the changing color of the foam on the wild torrent that leaped madly from height to height. The Tyrolese observed it too, for the dust upon its surface was the rallying signal of the free. Soon as the dust upon the stream was marked by all, a noble and commanding form arose upon the highest crag that shot its rugged spire towards heaven. The gray beard that floated upon the breeze, and the heron's plume that waved from the chamois cap, proclaimed that it was Hofer. He stood alone, but as the sharp crack of his quick-spoken rifle reverberated from crag to crag, the Tyrolese came forth from every rock and shrub, and filled the air with their fierce battle-cry. There was no silence *then*. But loosening the fastenings of their rocky bulwarks, they dashed them on the foe : the impending crags, toppling from their mountain summits, crushed the ranks of the horror-stricken French, who strove in vain to fly. The Tyrolese rushed down upon them, and with one blow that scarce met resistance, and one shout of victory, Tyrol was free !

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#### THE AUTHORESS.

“O woman, best are all things as the will  
Of God ordained them ;”——

In the progress of humanity, as mankind have thrown off the inhuman customs of the savage state, and become lovers of the truly beautiful and refined, woman has obtained her legitimate position in society ; and, from the mere slave of the ruthless tyrant, she has become sovereign—the subduer of hearts.

While man, in his rude condition, valued only what he considered useful, and more or less indispensable, the fair sex were esteemed only as they approximated his masculine nature, and woman's loveliest traits were then thought imperfections and evidences of her inferiority. As his pursuits constituted their ideal of perfection, she was the less valued as she excelled in her proper sphere, and the less loved as she was the more lovely. Her excellencies were as little appreciated as were the beauties of Milton's works by the profound mathematician, who soberly inquired, “What do they prove?” Under such circumstances, it is not strange that she should leave the graces uncultivated, as they only administered to her dishonor, and should endeavor to exchange her more refined nature for the rougher pursuits of man. But, since the respective provinces of the sexes, which are clearly separate and distinct, are now duly defined and appreciated, woman is valued for her own loveliness ; and the beauty of her own character has secured her the respect and even devotion of man. Though unable to cope in reasoning, and, perhaps, frightened by an argument, her surpassing persuasive power is a fair compensation, which shows her right without need

of proof. Her influence, as reflected upon society, gives it a charm which would else be unknown; and man, however depraved, acts with decorum in her presence, if he have not lost every feeling that would elevate him above the brute. Swaying such an influence with her magic power, why should she forsake these heavenly gifts for things of earth, which experience has shown are less powerful in her hands?

As the philosopher is not valued for his poetry, nor the poet for his philosophy, but each in his respective department wins for himself laurels, so all are surest of success and usefulness who confine themselves to that sphere of action which nature designed. It is true there are authoresses of whom the literary world may justly boast, whose works have gained much praise. This surely does not show her sphere not transgressed. It does not prove that she has not stifled her original design, and destroyed her usefulness in the sphere in which she wields so powerful an influence, and by which she has secured her deserved respect and esteem. The female of the uncivilized nations is, by habituation, able to perform the severest toil, yet no one of the least pretensions to refinement would affirm that this is her proper department, and that for this, she had not been compelled to sacrifice more useful natural gifts.

In the development of a nation's character, as well as that of individuals, nothing is more important than female influence. Her position and occupation are a sure index of the state of refinement of those upon whom her charms reflect, who so much need her balancing power to check the impulses of their varied propensities. But as an authoress, in any department of literature, she can profess only equality with man, and, as such, her influence is only what man has upon man. The experience of the past teaches that this is not her proper influence; that she was designed a sphere of action not common to man, though not less important. She is most valuable as she confines herself to this, and more appreciated as the importance of *her* department is recognized in distinction from that of man. Take this away, and society relapses into its original barbarity—our regard for the refined and beautiful is destroyed—and nature herself returns to her former wildness.

But we do not grant that this perversion of vocation often succeeds, even as proposed. Though many, seemingly dissatisfied with their nature, attempt things unnatural, they mostly terminate like the beautiful phantom of the love-deluded soul, that thinks the hovel would be a fairy palace if "one faithful heart will but share it" with him. It has not been considered that a year, a month, yea, even an hour, will dispel the delusion; and fancy, before so pleasing, now clothed in the realities of life unprovided for, augments the pains of the beguiled sufferer.