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978-1-108-02049-7 - A Woman's Thoughts about Women  
Dinah Maria Mulock Craik  
Frontmatter  
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### A Woman's Thoughts About Women

Dinah Craik (1826–87) was a prolific writer of fiction, poetry and essays. She was best known for her novels, which appropriated well-worked narratives of individuals triumphing over adversity through hard work and moral integrity against a backdrop of industrialisation and the ascent of the middle classes. The most successful, *John Halifax, Gentleman*, tells the tale of a boy who works his way out of poverty. Craik herself was familiar with hardship: her father Thomas Mulock, a nonconformist minister, had spent periods confined to a lunatic asylum, and abandoned his children after his wife's death in 1854. In this work (originally published serially in *Chambers's Journal of Popular Literature, Science and Arts*), Craik provided support and advice for single women like herself. She was highly critical of learned helplessness and advocated independence and cross-class sympathy, believing women should 'lead active, intelligent, industrious lives: lives complete in themselves'. For more information on this author, see [http://orlando.cambridge.org/public/svPeople?person\\_id=craidi](http://orlando.cambridge.org/public/svPeople?person_id=craidi)

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# A WOMAN'S THOUGHTS

ABOUT

## WOMEN.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF

“JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN,”

&c. &c.

“He that good thinketh, good may do,  
And God will help him thereunto :  
For was never good work wrought  
Without beginning of good thought.”

IN ONE VOLUME.

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## PREFACE.

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THESE "Thoughts," a portion of which originally appeared in "Chambers' Journal," are, I wish distinctly to state, *only* Thoughts. They do not pretend to solve any problems, to lay down any laws, to decide out of one life's experience and within the limits of one volume, any of those great questions which have puzzled generations, and will probably puzzle generations more. They lift the banner of no party; and assert the opinions of no *clique*. They do not even attempt an originality,

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which, in treating of a subject like the present, would be either dangerous or impossible.

In this book, therefore, many women will find simply the expression of what they have themselves, consciously or unconsciously, oftentimes thought ; and the more deeply, perhaps, because it has never come to the surface in words or writing. Those who do the most, often talk — sometimes think—the least : yet thinkers, talkers, and doers, being in earnest, achieve their appointed end. The thinkers put wisdom into the mouth of the speakers, and both strive together to animate and counsel the doers. Thus all work harmoniously together ; and verily

“ Was never good work wrought,  
Without beginning of good thought.”



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## PREFACE.

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In the motto which I have chosen for its title-page, lies at once the purpose and preface of this my book. Had it not been planned and completed, honestly, carefully, solemnly, even fearfully, with a keen sense of all it might do, or leave undone; and did not I believe it to be in some degree a good book, likely to effect some good, I would never have written or published it. How much good it may do, or how little, is not mine either to know, to speculate, or to decide.

I have written it, I hope, as humbly as conscientiously; and thus I leave it.

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