

Woman's Emancipation

Lizzie M. Holmes

1891

While it is certain emancipation would speedily follow economic freedom, it is not true that such emancipation is a part of or would come simultaneously with economic freedom. Heinzen said: "In the man the *human being* alone can be oppressed or liberated; in the woman the sex as well." Woman is doubly, enslaved. She wears the chains her poor laboring brother wears, and, besides, the bonds he in his ignorance placed on her ages ago when he first began to take note of her periodical weakness. Naturally, it would not take long for an economically free woman to see that she *need* not be a slave in *any* sense.

But in the meantime a great and necessary work can and must be done, while anticipating this economic freedom. Woman's subjugation has become so engrafted in the human constitution during the centuries of its enforcement, that both men and women are almost unconscious of it. Even advanced and thinking men do not realize it. They take the timid, loving, obedient homage of women—women who long for love and kindness and to obtain them yield readily to that inborn subservience in their natures unconsciously—they take this deep, affectionate, self-abnegation as the spontaneous, natural return to their passional desires. I do not believe one man in fifty understands the woman who loves him, or knows what it is she gives him from the wealth of her rich, loving soul. Without comprehending it, each occupies the old, old customary position—the served and servant. It is to overcome this deeply imbedded sentiment, it is to lead men and women to a realizing sense of their true relations, it is to teach woman to come up out of that soft, mystical darkness that lulls all her senses to sleep, and learn to be an individual, an entity, a free, independent being as man is, or will be, that this one issue must be made, aside from the great struggle for universal economic emancipation.—*Lizzie M. Holmes, in Lucifer.*

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