

FOREWORD

This book is, in a way, another consequence of the War. After 1918, when the task of restoring contacts and remaking understanding for things German devolved on everyone in the Germanic field, I offered for several semesters at Barnard College a course on German life and institutions. Out of those lectures came the incentive to give to American readers an account of a cultural movement which, it seems to me, is of real human interest and, involving as it does the majority of Germany's citizens, constitutes a vital chapter in German history. The Germans give it the sweeping title of the Woman Question.

That the study was not completed in the ferment of post-war conditions was for some time a matter of sore disappointment to me. The attainment and exercise of new rights for women under the republican régime in Germany, seemed to call for appropriate celebration in print, a chronicle with its climax, say, in the constitutional assembly of 1919 in Weimar. A dramatic story could be made of it. But the longer one studies the German woman question, the more evident it becomes that it is not a thing of climaxes, however easy it would be to point out certain high lights in its history. Its significance lies rather in its unforced, natural growth and in the permanence it has achieved as a factor in German life. Eventually I found much of my material in the period since the revolution, material that complements

the earlier chapters in a rather unexpected fashion. I have consequently cooled my impatience with the assuring conviction that the decade of incubation has been a benefit, since without those enforced delays I should have missed the proper focus on a movement which declined to regard 1919 as its finale.

My research would have proceeded even more slowly had it not been for the cordial coöperation of Mr. Roger Howson, Librarian of Columbia University, who, particularly at the outset when foreign collections were still out of my reach, did everything possible to furnish me material here. It is my pleasant duty also to acknowledge the indispensable bibliographical assistance given me by the staffs of the State Library in Berlin and the University Library in Munich. The Secretary of the German Federation of Women's Associations has earned my unending gratitude by putting the records of the Federation at my disposal as well as by forwarding my investigation in countless other ways.

I am very greatly indebted to my colleagues Professor W. A. Braun and Professor La Rue Van Hook for many suggestions and for help in reading proof.

H. W. P.

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