

BETWEEN THE COVERS RARE BOOKS

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William E. Gladstone

Autograph Letter Signed as Prime Minister about Women's Rights

11, Carlton House Terrace,
S.W.

Jan 31. 70.

Madam

I beg you to accept my
thanks for your eloquent work
on "woman's rights" which I
have read alike with interest
and with sympathy.

Observing that it is Privately
Printed, and therefore not
accessible in the usual manner,

Two pages dated 31 January, 1870 on black bordered mourning stationary addressed from 11, Carlton House Terrace. Removed from an album with slight paper remnants in the margins, very good or better. A letter from the Liberal politician who was one of the great English Prime Ministers, written in the first of his four terms, to an unidentified woman who sent him a book on woman's rights. As follows:

"Madame, I beg you to accept my thanks for your eloquent work on 'woman's rights' which I have read alike with interest and with sympathy. Observing that it is Privately Printed, and therefore not accessible in the usual manner, I take the great liberty of saying how much I should like to be possessed of one, or were it possible of two, other copies. They are intended for destinations which I am sure you would consider worthy. I have the honour to be Madam, Your very faithful servant, W.E. Gladstone."

While we are not sure who the recipient was, we can speculate who Gladstone wanted at least one of the extra copies for. A third person letter from Queen Victoria to Gladstone on May 6, 1870 on the subject of women's rights references Gladstone sending her such a work earlier in the year: "The Queen feels so strongly upon this dangerous & unchristian & unnatural cry & movement of 'women's rights,' in which she knows Mr. Gladstone agrees (as he sent her that excellent pamphlet by a Lady)..." Gladstone agreed, sort of. Victoria and Gladstone shared some religious piety about the differences between men and women, especially while Victoria was in the throes of grief over the death of Prince Albert in 1861, and while he exhibited sympathy for the lot of women, and a lively interest in the debate, he refused to introduce the topic of women's suffrage into Parliament, despite the urging of some of his Liberal Party. [BTC#398387]

I take the great liberty of
saying how much I should
like to be possessed of one, or
even it possible of two, three
copies. They are intended
for destinations which I am
sure you would consider
worthy. I have the honor to be

Madam

Yours very faithfully

W. P. Wood