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Josephine Butler, Victorian feminist and leader of the British campaign to end the state regulation of prostitution, has been the subject of extensive historical research. Her campaign to repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts in Britain is important to historians of feminism, the history of sexuality, and state formation. Butler was also significant in the anti-regulation campaign in India, in the creation of institutions of higher learning for British women, and other feminist organizing. Her evangelical Christianity, however, has been a difficult aspect of her biography. The editors of this volume would argue that her religious convictions have not been fully understood or appreciated by scholars and they have thus diminished the complexity of her life and work. This book focuses on her religious faith and practice in order to understand the interplay between her religion and her politics.

This book offers a valuable revision of Josephine Butler but its implications are wider than her singular life. The influence of Protestantism on nineteenth century feminism is an acknowledged but underdeveloped area of research and the authors of this volume suggest how attention to religion would enhance our understanding of feminist organizing in this period.

This volume includes eight essays. Some of the authors are well-known to scholars interested in Josephine Butler, notably Jane Jordan who published a biography of Butler in 2001. Others are well-known for work on nineteenth century Protestant women, like Susan Mumm, or Annemieke Van Drenth who has published Butler's influence in the Netherlands.

Each essays ask how understanding Butler's religious faith enhances our understanding of this history. In Jane Jordan's essay, "Trophies of the Saviour: Josephine Butler's Biographical Sketches of Prostitutes", she considers how Butler's ideas about death shaped the short biographies of "fallen" women she had rescued. While the publication of these stories was intended to raise public opposition to effects of the Contagious Diseases Acts, what underlay the content of each story was an evangelical belief about a good death and the conventions of conversion

narratives. Jordon's essay may be contrasted with Pat Starkey's essay on Butler's other published biographies of saints and her own husband. In this writing, Starkey argues, Butler revealed her own preoccupations but was not particularly interested in the specifics of the historical conditions her subjects inhabited. She "became both narrator and subject" (137) of these biographies. Helen Mathers considers the Biblical sources of Josephine Butler's self-representation. Butler, she argues, saw herself as akin to a Biblical prophet, able to "show forth the mind of God" (47). She also was "almost unique among women philanthropists" in her belief that she was a sister to the prostitutes, a sinner before God, just like them. This conviction, Mathers argues, came from an evangelical Christian understanding of sin and forgiveness. But Butler's evangelicalism could not be the only explanation. Why did other evangelical women, like Ellice Hopkins or Florence Booth of the Salvation Army, prefer to regard themselves as mothers to wayward, fallen girls and not as sisters who shared a common, sinful nature?

Two essays closely read evidence about Butler's faith. In Jenny Dagg's essay, she considers how Butler's understanding of "spiritual womanhood" shaped her feminist organizing. Diana Neal considers how Butler responded to the Catholic Church and its hierarchy both as a Christian and as a pragmatic political organizer.

In essays by Susan Mumm and Lisa Nolland, there is a direct engagement with the way previous historians have read evidence about Butler's life and work. Mumm argues that historians including Lucy Bland, Louise Jackson and Judith Walkowitz have downplayed Butler's effort to suppress the "white slave traffic" because these historians are not convinced that young, innocent English girls were duped into entering foreign brothels from which escape was rare. Mumm argues that since a contemporary international traffic in women has been documented by the United Nations and other organizations "despite the greater political and social power of women suggests that Butler might have been neither a fantasist nor a monomaniac in her attempts to publicise the Victorian equivalent." (56) The historical thinking here is not well considered. The presence of such a trade now neither proves nor disproves an international traffic in women existed in Victorian times. Moreover, the historians cited were interested in how the trade was represented by social activists who perhaps distorted critical aspects of the trade to arouse public outrage. This inevitably raises questions about the international trade itself. Mumm does not engage with these questions which are central to the historiography that her essay challenges. In her essay, Lisa Nolland presents a close reading of several historians of Butler and she argues that they have failed to take seriously her religious commitments. Frequently, these scholars have revealed more about their own lack of empathy for Christian faith than Butler's beliefs. In particular, Nolland criticizes scholars for their disappointment that Butler expressed beliefs that contemporary feminists would reject. Nolland's essay is suggestive but it does not demonstrate how empathy with Butler's views would be accomplished nor how it would transform our understanding of

her life and work.

Annemieke van Drenth considers Butler's influence on the women's movement in Netherlands. This history would compliment recent work on the campaigns against the Contagious Diseases Acts in India and moves this history out of the narrow confines of British history.

This collection of essays will be of interest to scholars of nineteenth century feminism in Britain and to those interested in more broadly understanding religious faith in history. This volume asks historians to consider what difference it makes to our understanding of the biography of Josephine Butler and nineteenth century feminism to appreciate the complexity of her religious beliefs and the way that those beliefs shaped her political campaigns. These essays suggest questions for research that future scholars may pursue.

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