ELIZABETH GASKELL

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Elizabeth Gaskell

Jane Spencer

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JANE SPENCER

Editors' Preface

The study of women's writing has been long neglected by a male critical establishment both in academic circles and beyond. As a result, many women writers have either been unfairly neglected or have been marginalised in some way, so that their true influence and importance has been ignored. Other women writers have been accepted by male critics and academics, but on terms which seem, to many women readers of this generation, to be false or simplistic. In the past the internal conflicts involved in being a woman in a male-dominated society have been largely ignored by readers of both sexes, and this has affected our reading of women's work. The time has come for a serious reassessment of women's writing in the light of what we understand today.

This series is designed to help in that reassessment.

All the books are written by women because we believe that men's understanding of feminist critique is only, at best, partial. And besides, men have held the floor quite long enough.

EVA FIGES
ADELE KING

Notes on the Texts

- CCP *Cranford*, and 'Cousin Phillis', in *Cranford/Cousin Phillis* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976).
- CP&T 'Curious, If True', in *Cousin Phillis and Other Tales* (Oxford: World's Classics, 1981).
- L *The Letters of Mrs Gaskell*, ed. J. A. V. Chapple and Arthur Pollard (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966).
- LCB *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975).
- MB *Mary Barton* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970).
- NS *North and South* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977).
- R *Ruth* (Oxford: World's Classics, 1985).
- SL *Sylvia's Lovers* (Oxford: World's Classics, 1982).
- WD *Wives and Daughters* (Oxford: World's Classics, 1987).