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Guide to the

Anonymous manuscript, "Parliament of Women,"

1826

Pforz MS

Summary

Title: Anonymous manuscript, "Parliament of Women,"

Date: 1826

Size: 32 pages (8 double sheets)

Abstract: Incomplete, apparently unpublished manuscript by an unidentified, possibly Irish author. Describes an assembly of women, self-constituted as some kind of parliament or council, who set themselves to the task of enacting "such laws as may prove beneficial to the public, creditable to themselves." They debate on subjects such as man's worth (to a woman), woman's frivolity and mode of dress, and the power of prayer. They call each other "sister" and have names such as Prudent Cecily, Mild Ally, Serious Anne, Truehearted Abigail, and Wise Themis -- but also Deborah Coffey and Lady Anne Kirby. In "speeches" and "orations," the women, in turn, talk of the seven deadly sins and of the four cardinal virtues. Includes some verse. Made up of numbered pages 7-10, 15-30, 41-48, and four unnumbered pages. Dated on the third unnumbered page: "July 8th 1826 / in the Parish of Carr[a?] / Knockboy." Formerly owned by the book collector Thomas Phillipps (MS 15240); perhaps given the title of "Parliament of Women" by Phillipps, or a later owner.

Preferred citation: Anonymous manuscript, "Parliament of Women", Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library

Scope and Content Note

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Key Terms

Subjects

Matriarchy -- Fiction

Women -- Conduct of life

Names

Phillipps, Thomas, Sir, 1792-1872