



FELIX ADLER

education.” The value of activity, of respect for the expression of individual and group differences, and of moral instruction adapted to different age levels were characteristic emphases. Adler also founded several groups that merged into the Child Study Association in 1907. In 1928 the Fieldston School was established as an extension of the Ethical Culture School.

Felix Adler's contributions to the development of social betterment and civic reform include the establishment of a district nursing system later carried on by the Henry Street settlement, and of cooperative stores, settlement houses, and good-government clubs. In a series of public addresses in 1882 he called attention to insanitary conditions in tenements, which led to his appointment as a member of the State Tenement House Commission two years later. He served on the Lexow Committee in 1894, which dealt with the problem of vice, and on the Committee of Fifteen that helped to elect reform Mayor Seth Low. Mayor John P. Mitchel named him chairman of the committee appointed to investigate the strike of 60,000 garment workers in 1911, and he helped to write the arbitration agreement for the garment industry. From 1904 to 1921 he was chairman of the National Child Labor Committee.

In his later life Felix Adler became more concerned with the intellectual clarification of his ethical views and the enunciation of moral principles valid for both individual and group relations. From 1902 to 1933 he was professor of social and political ethics at Columbia University. In 1908-09 he was Roosevelt Exchange Professor in Berlin, and in 1928 the Hibbert Lecturer at Oxford. In

1911 he presided over the first Universal Races Congress in London. He helped organize the International Congress for Moral Education held in Rome in 1926. In 1928 he was elected president of the eastern division of the American Philosophical Association. He was a member of the editorial board and a frequent contributor to the *International Journal of Ethics*, and also wrote for the American Ethical Union's publication, *The Standard*.

The principal works of Adler's early life, when he was occupied with institution-building and other practical matters, are *Creed and Deed* (1877); *The Moral Instruction of Children* (1892); *The Religion of Duty* (1905); and *The World Crisis and Its Meaning* (1915). The most complete statements of his mature philosophical views are found in *An Ethical Philosophy of Life* (1918) and the published version of his Oxford lectures, *The Reconstruction of the Spiritual Ideal* (1924).

Felix Adler died in his eighty-second year after a short illness. In his own day his thought influenced liberal clergymen of every faith and multitudes of others interested in an ethical approach to social and political questions; the institutions he founded remain as monuments to the vision and energy that characterized his leadership.

A large collection of Adler's papers is in the Columbia University Library. The first part of *An Ethical Philosophy of Life* is autobiographical. H. L. Friess, *Felix Adler: Memories and Studies*, edited by F. Weingartner (1981) and H. Neumann, *Spokesmen for Ethical Religion* (1951) set Adler's career in its historical context. See also the article by Friess in *The Dictionary of American Biography*.

L. F. F.

## AGASSIZ, ELIZABETH CABOT CARY

December 5, 1822—June 27, 1907

Author and educator, was the second-oldest of the seven children of Thomas Graves Cary and Mary Ann Cushing (Perkins) Cary. She was born at the home of her maternal grandfather, Thomas H. Perkins, a Boston merchant and benefactor of the Perkins Institute for the Blind. When she was ten her father, a Harvard graduate, lawyer, and unsuccessful businessman in New York City, moved his family back to his native Boston, where he worked in his father-in-law's firm and later served as treasurer of two textile mills in Lowell, Massachusetts. Elizabeth Cary, a lively but delicate girl, was educated at home

by a governess. After her older sister married a Harvard professor she moved between Boston society and the intellectual circles of Cambridge, where she met the well-known Swiss naturalist, Louis Agassiz, a professor in Harvard's Lawrence Scientific School. Two years after the death in Europe of Agassiz's first wife, he and Elizabeth Cary were married in Boston, on April 25, 1850. In the early 1850s, when Louis Agassiz worked in a marine laboratory in South Carolina and lectured at a Charleston medical school, Elizabeth Agassiz became a virtual partner in her husband's scientific work, while developing the social and intellectual qualities that were the hallmark of her own career. Her notes on his lectures were the foundation for many of his publications, to which she also contributed her own animated and authoritative literary style. In 1859 she published a guide to marine zoology, and another in 1865 in collaboration with Agassiz's son Alexander. She had no children of her own.

An astute manager of limited finances, Elizabeth Agassiz ran a school for girls in the large Agassiz house in Cambridge from 1856 to 1863 in order to help her husband pay for his scientific work without having to strain his health by public lecturing, and to support the three children of his first marriage, Alexander, Ida, and Pauline. Louis Agassiz was the star of a faculty consisting of several Harvard professors; Elizabeth Agassiz was administrator, treasurer, and disciplinarian of the eighty teenaged students.

In 1865-66 the Agassizs accompanied the Thayer Expedition to Brazil, hoping to restore Louis's ill health. As scribe of the expedition Elizabeth Agassiz recorded her husband's lectures and scientific observations, which, combined with her own travel journal, were published as *A Journey in Brazil* (1867) "by Professor and Mrs. Agassiz," a readable and popular book which raised Louis Agassiz's fame to a new height. From December 1871, to August 1872, she accompanied her husband on the Hassler Expedition through the Strait of Magellan and published an account of his discoveries concerning glaciation. In 1873 she helped him plan and administer the coeducational Anderson School of Natural History a summer school and marine laboratory on Buzzard's Bay.

Louis Agassiz's death in December 1873, was followed eight days later by that of his son's wife, which left three small children to Elizabeth Agassiz's care. Alexander and his family continued to live with Elizabeth Agassiz for years, and his copper-mining fortune provided financial security for her. She worked for twelve years on the preparation of her husband's biography, a work of enduring merit.



ELIZABETH CABOT CARY AGASSIZ

A new phase in Elizabeth Agassiz's life began in 1878 when Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Gilman of Cambridge, whose daughter was nearing college age, gathered seven women together to promote the establishment of a women's college staffed by Harvard professors. Supported by Charles William Eliot, president of Harvard, William James, and others, the "Harvard Annex" opened in 1879 with twenty students. When it was incorporated in 1882 as The Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women, Elizabeth Agassiz became president. As secretary, Arthur Gilman continued to exercise most executive functions, and the academic program was directed by Harvard mathematics professor William E. Byerly. Elizabeth Agassiz's duties, which consisted largely of public relations, included fund-raising and diplomatic negotiations intended to secure an institutional link with Harvard. The agreement reached in 1895 provided merely that the Harvard Corporation would approve faculty appointments to the women's college and that the president of Harvard would countersign its diplomas, which would bear the Harvard seal. To her surprise and dismay, a storm of protest led by alumnae arose against Mrs. Agassiz for being insufficiently aggressive, and critics attempted to prevent the chartering of the college on the ground that Harvard had made no commitment of financial support. At legislative hearings on the charter, Elizabeth Agassiz's assurance that the prestige of Harvard professors was as good as money in the bank, along with President Eliot's assurances of good faith, carried the day. Radcliffe College, named for Harvard's first female benefactor,

## ALCOTT. (AMOS) BRONSON

received its charter in 1894. Perhaps for tactical reasons Agassiz absented herself from Cambridge during the subsequent period of reorganization, making an inspection tour of English women's colleges in 1894-5.

Arthur Gilman was named regent and Agnes Irwin dean of Radcliffe College. Elizabeth Agassiz retained the title of president, gradually relinquishing responsibilities to Dean Irwin, who was passed over for the presidency after Agassiz's resignation in 1902, in favor of Harvard professor LeBaron R. Briggs. Believing strongly in the Harvard connection, Agassiz used her diplomatic talents to secure his unanimous election and to smooth his path. A portly and dignified figure in her later years, she continued as "honorary president" to receive students at weekly teas, award diplomas and give the address at commencement, and provide tactful insights on questions of personnel and building expansion.

Elizabeth Agassiz did not consider herself a feminist, never spoke out on public issues, and believed that women were barred by nature from certain careers. In fund-raising she stressed Radcliffe's practical value in the training of teachers, but she also justified women's education for its own sake and insisted that Radcliffe maintain academic standards equal to those of Harvard. Her social and intellectual background, her reputation for integrity, and her diplomatic personality contributed to her successful role in the development of coordinate women's colleges, probably the only feasible way at that time for women to gain access to the resources of eastern universities.

Elizabeth Agassiz continued to enjoy her books, her music, and her large family until she was severely incapacitated by a cerebral hemorrhage in 1904. A second stroke in 1907 caused her death in Arlington Heights, Massachusetts. She was buried beside her husband in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge.

Elizabeth Agassiz's papers are in the Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, and the Radcliffe College Archives. Her writings include *A First Lesson in Natural History* (1859); *Seaside Studies in Natural History*, with Alexander Agassiz (1865); *A Journey in Brazil* (1867), written with her husband, and *Louis Agassiz: His Life and Correspondence* (2 vols., 1885) Many of her letters are included in L. A. Paton *Elizabeth Cary Agassiz* (1919), which is especially strong in Radcliffe history. L.H. Tharp, *Adventurous Alliance: The story of the Agassiz Family of Boston* (1959) includes more material on her ancestry and family life. E. Lurie, *Louis Agassiz A Life in Science* (1960) describes her role in her husband's career. See also the article by H. Hawkins in *Notable American Women*.

L. F. F.