

Equal Rights

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FIVE CENTS

SATURDAY,
JUNE 6, 1925



Fru Betzy Kjelsberg

Chief Government Factory Inspector of Norway, President Norwegian Council of Women and Member of the Royal Unemployment Commission of Norway, who will speak before the Norse-American Centennial to be held June 7-9 in Hamline, Minnesota.

Feminist Notes

Enlightening the "Heathen"

IN India the "white man's burden" seems to involve a fight against native efforts to raise the marriage age for girls from 12 to 14. A bill making such provision was introduced in the Legislative Assembly by a native member, Dr. Sir Hari Singh Gour. It had apparently smooth sailing until the time came for a final vote. Then the government threw the weight of its influence in opposition and with aid of 16 English members the bill was defeated. Six English members voted affirmatively and eight others were either absent or not voting. The total vote was 54 to 26, so had the English voted solidly for the change it would have carried. While the bill was pending the press reported the case of a 13-year old girl patient in a hospital undergoing her third confinement. It had no effect on the banner carriers of European civilization.

Consider Progress Better Than Charity

AS might have been expected it is not all smooth sailing with the first women's club in Bagdad. This was organized about the beginning of the current year. Its membership consists mainly of Moslem women and the title selected was the Arabic equivalent for "Progressive Club." This intimation of need of stimulating progress in that part of the world proved offensive to some high officials and complaint was made to the king that the Mohammedan women were going outside of their proper sphere. His Majesty ordered that the name of the club be changed to "Club for Charity," probably reasoning that that would keep it from functioning as an organized effort for justice. The club members, however, refused to obey. They removed the sign and got along for two months without a label. Then the old sign was replaced and nothing has so far been done about it by the minions of the law.

Newfoundland Women Thank Premier

A RESOLUTION of appreciation and thanks to Prime Minister W. S. Monroe, of Newfoundland, was adopted by the Women's Enfranchisement League of the colony for his efforts in behalf of equal suffrage which recently brought success to the movement.

Woman Sculptor Receives Recognition

BUSH HOUSE, Kingsway, London, is to have a huge statuary symbolical group "to the friendship of English-speaking peoples" unveiled on July 4. It is the work of Miss Malvina Hoffman of New York.

Forging Ahead in Brazil

IT is only recently that women have entered the professions in Brazil, but already the country has many women doctors, lawyers, dentists, pharmacists, musicians, painters and sculptors.

No Daniel Come to Judgment Here

A FINE of \$50 was imposed by Judge Schultdt of the Washington Traffic Court on a Mrs. Thelma Henson who, in applying for an automobile license had given her maiden name. Mrs. Henson denied being a member of the Lucy Stone League, for which reason the judge seems to have been moved to severity. Good judgment is apparently not held to be an essential qualification for positions on the bench in Washington's Traffic Court.

The Evil That Laws Do Lives After Them

ALTHOUGH the old law has been repealed for some years, which made an American woman's nationality depend on that of her husband, some of the harm done by it still remains. An example is that of Mrs. Mary E. Newns, of Baltimore, who though born in the United States of American parents and has lived here all her life is not an American citizen. In fact she is a woman without a country. She married an English citizen in 1912, under the old dispensation, lost her American nationality and became an English subject. Later, under the new law, her husband became naturalized, but this ceremony left her outside the pale under American law while under English law she followed her husband's change of nationality. Now the couple are planning a trip to Great Britain and are faced by the double problem as to how Mrs. Newns may get out of this country and return afterwards. She has been refused a passport because not a citizen and if she should go will be looked upon as an alien immigrant subject to the immigration law on return. As under British law she is not a British subject she can get no passport from it and cannot be included in the quota allowed that country, nor is there any other quota in which she may be included. To depend on the exercise of common sense by the immigration authorities or the Department of Labor would be an extra-hazardous risk. The State Department has already run true to form in the passport matter. Other immigrants without a country have been sent floating back and forth on the ocean without permission to land anywhere and this may be Mrs. Newns' fate unless some administrative official should recognize during a lucid interval that human rights are more sacred than silly laws or their sillier interpretation.

The First Militants

THE first woman soldier in the American army was not the famous Molly Pitcher, but Margaret Corbin, also known as "Molly," who fought at Long Island in 1776 against the attack of Lord Howe on New York. There she helped her husband in firing a cannon at the advancing Hessians until he was killed. Then with the help of another soldier she continued the work until she herself fell seriously wounded. After the war she was pensioned. Molly Pitcher's exploit took place in 1778, two years later than Margaret Corbin's.

A Pre-Revolutionary Feminist

ALTHOUGH it is by no means certain who was the first woman editor in America, that distinction may be claimed, for the time being at least, for a resident of Baltimore, Miss Mary K. Goddard, who became editor in 1774 of the *Maryland Journal*, the newspaper of largest circulation of that time. At the same time she held the place of postmaster of Baltimore and must have been quite efficient, as she was not disturbed in her occupancy of the office until 1789, when the United States Constitution went into effect and the postal service passed under control of the first Federal Postmaster-General, Samuel Osgood. Pending the discovery of an earlier feminist pioneer, Miss Goddard's claim must be conceded.

Progress Begets Progress

IN an address at Baltimore on May 28, Dona Berta Lutz, of Brazil, recently chosen as head of the newly formed Inter-American Union of Women said that "American women have set an example to the rest of the world and made it easier for the women of other nations to come forward politically and educationally, and this will make for the greater progress of nations and the greater understanding between them. It is not the idea of being equal to a man or receiving the recognition that will be important to the future of the race, but through this equality only can we assure the future that women of great intelligence will be allowed to use their brains for the common good. Universities in most places now will recognize the work of women the same as men. The achievements of women in the field of medicine and science in the last few years alone are enough to justify emancipation. In former ages all this brain power was shut off from the progress of the world 'in order to keep woman in her place.' Woman has found her place and still she is a woman."

THEY looked from farmhouse windows;
Their joyless faces showed
Between the curtain and the sill—
You saw them from the road.
They looked up while they churned and
cooked
And washed and swept and sewed.
Some could die and some just lived and
many a one went mad.
But it's "Mother, be up at four o'clock,"
the men-folk bade.

They looked from town-house windows,
A shadow on the shade
Rose-touched by colorful depths of room
Where harmonies were made.
Within, the women went and came
And delicately played.
Some could grow and some could work,
but many of them were dead.
"We must be gowned and gay tonight
when the men come home," they
said.

They looked from factory windows
Where many an iron gin
Drew in their days and ground their days
On the black wheels within,
Drew in their days and wove their days
To a wedge exceeding thin.
And they suffered what women have suffered
over and over again.
And it's "Double your speed for a living
wage, ye mothers and wives of
men!"

Women

By Zona Gale

(Copyright, American Magazine, 1912)

Editor's Note: Miss Gale is one of the most popular writers of fiction and poetry in America. She is on the Editorial Board of Equal Rights and is one of the judges in the Equal Rights Prize Essay Contest which closes June 15.

THEY looked from brothel windows
And caught the curtain down.
A piteous, beckoning hand thrust out
To summon or clod or clown.
They named them true, they named them
true,
The Women of the Town.
Some could live and some just died and
most of them none of us know.
And it's "What if the fallen women vote!"
from the men who keep them so.

Faint from without the windows
In many a fallow land
There sounds a trample of feet and a light
Is flashed from hand to hand.
And out of the dark grow a frightened few
Who dimly understand.
Some are wise and some are less and
many more are in doubt.
"But it's This is death! And where lies
life? We charge you to find it out!"

Education for Citizenship

THE Woman's Press Club of New York City, of which Miss Amy Wren is president, held a large meeting in the Astor Gallery of the Waldorf-Astoria on Saturday afternoon, May 23, the subject of the day being "Education for Citizenship." Several foreign delegates to the International Council of Women were present.

Hon. Frances Marion Brandon, assistant Corporation Counsel, spoke on "America's Treasured Manuscript—Bradford's 'Plimoth Plantation'"; S. Standwood Menken, of the New York Bar, an international jurist, spoke on "International Responsibility"; Mrs. Frederick Nathan, Manhattan Chapter, D. A. R., spoke on "The New Force in Citizenship"; Hon. Royal S. Copeland, United States Senator, spoke on "Senate Rules and the Constitution"; Mrs. Winter Russell, of the League of Nations Non-Partisan Association, spoke on "The League of Nations and the World Court"; Hon. Blanche W. Welzmuller, Deputy Commissioner of Markets, spoke on "Our Lower East Side — The Melting Pot"; Hon. Susan Brandeis reminded the audience

that women had commenced the struggle for equality at Seneca Falls in 1848, and that the women of today should continue the struggle toward that goal. She was followed by Mrs. Clarence M. Smith, New York chairman of the National Woman's Party, who pointed out that in any discussion of "Education for Citizenship" women must realize that they could not take their place side by side with men as self-respecting citizens, until they had removed every discrimination against women from the laws of the United States. The women were urged to stand by other women in business and the professions and help them in their advancement to higher offices; to work, both within and without the political parties, for equal representation of women of character and ability as chairmen of important political committees, for the nomination of able women to major as well as minor offices, and for such recognition of equal value that in the end both sexes shall be free to make their common contribution to human welfare. Mrs. Leslie J. Tompkins, Manhattan Borough, chairman of the League of Women Voters, was the next

WHAT is the news from the windows
now?

At some the faces throng
And they cry: "Come soon or we wait
in vain,
We who have waited long."
From some a curious glance is flung
With the bars of a careless song.
Some are open and some are closed and
some are hung for a feast,
And some stare blank as a harem wall
curtained against the east.

Dear God, to watch the women look!
From task and game they turn,
Some are afraid of losing men
And some of what they earn,
Some light the sacrificial flame
And dare not watch it burn.
Some are scornful, some bar the door at
the sound of the first alarms,
But it's "Mother, beware! It is we you
chain!" And the babies leap in
their arms.

All swift the cry comes down the world:
"Take task and take caress,
But, by our living spirits, we
Have other ways to bless.
Now let us teach the thing we've learned
In labor and loneliness.
We strive with none. We fold men home
by the power of a great new word.
We who have long been dead are alive.
We too are thy people, Lord!"

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OBJECT OF THE WOMAN'S PARTY

To remove all forms of the subjection of women.

THE LUCRETIA MOTT AMENDMENT

"Men and women shall have Equal Rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction."

"Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation"

[Senate Joint Resolution Number 21.
House Joint Resolution Number 75.]

Introduced in the Senate, December 10, 1923,
by SENATOR CHARLES E. CURTIS.
Introduced in the House of Representatives,
December 13, 1923,
by REPRESENTATIVE D. R. ANTHONY.

All Hail The Pioneers

IT is fitting that the National Woman's Party should extend greetings to the Norse-American Centennial of the United States and Canada, which will be held in Hamline, Minnesota, June 7-9. This occasion marks the hundredth anniversary of the sailing of the sloop "Restaurationen" and the founding of the first Norwegian settlement in America. Only 53 passengers embarked on the little vessel in 1825, but being endowed with the spirit of the pioneers their advent inaugurated the first real migration from Norway to this country.

It is a well-known fact that the Scandanavian peoples have from time immemorial held very advanced ideas with regard to the status of the feminine sex. The coming of the Norwegians to our shores has automatically tended to elevate the position of women in American life.

As pioneer to pioneer we extend greetings to our Norse-American compatriots. May the spirit of adventure and daring that brought them across stormy seas, and their native love of justice, enlist their efforts in the cause of equal rights for men and women.

The Progress of Mankind

MINERVA, Goddess of Wisdom, sprang full grown from the head of Jove while the god was suffering with a splitting headache. So the ancients tell us. Does not the allegory typify the birth of wisdom out of the painful experiences of humanity and so suggest why in all parts of the earth the same idea springs up simultaneously?

When we find the women of Scandinavian lands dealing with the same problems as the women of the United States and finding the way to solution by the same paths, we are compelled to believe that both problems and solutions in widely-separated lands have been born of sheer force of circumstance and stern logic.

In Scandinavian lands, as in ours, woman has had a leading place in the domestic and public economy. Hers have been the daily household tasks of making the home, the bulwark of the nation; hers the heavy labor beside husband, father or brother, in field, on farm, in shop or office; hers also the work of bearing and rearing the nation, of making out of the products of the field, the flesh of men and women, out of the instincts and desires of human creatures, heroic men and women. Hers has been the duty of going beside man into new lands to build out of the wilderness a new home in pain and loneliness. Hers has been the burden of a partner in peace and in war.

It is not strange then that when she saw the fruits of her labors swallowed up in a partnership in which rewards and honors go to one member, in which control is by law in the hands of the male partner, herself excluded from the benefits of her work in the family or community,—it is not strange, that using the wit with which she is endowed equally with man, she should have asked for a recognition of her labor.

It is because of head-splitting or heart-breaking experience that women in all lands are asking for equality, at least before the law, in domestic affairs, in trades and professions, in all public relationships. They ask in the United States, as they ask in other lands, that in the scales of justice fatherhood shall not weigh more heavily than motherhood; that husbandhood shall not tip the scales as against wifehood; that the contribution of womanhood to family and State shall be recognized as fully and substantially as that of manhood. Women ask in the United States, as they ask in other lands, for equal opportunities in the law, the church, the hospital and surgery, the school and university; for an equal chance to work in office, shop and factory unhampered by law or tradition or sentiment; for a fair field wherever they may be led to earn their daily bread.

These demands have led to the Scandinavian marriage law, described by Fru Kjelsberg in this issue of EQUAL RIGHTS, a law adopted by Sweden and Denmark, and about to be accepted by Norway. They have led to a request for the removal of the last barriers against women, whether legal or economic, in every occupation. They have led in the United States to the request for the incorporation of the principle of equality in the fundamental law of the land, as expressed by the proposed amendment to the Federal Constitution that "Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction."

Voices from Scandinavia, voices from every land, join with ours in expressing this one idea born of centuries of pain, that woman must take her place uprightly and equally beside man. Only so can the progress of woman, which is ever the progress of man, become the forward march of humanity.

Woman's Position in Denmark

By Kirstin Gjessing

Editor's Note: Miss Gjessing is official Inspector of Factories for Copenhagen, and is a member of the standing committee for Trades and Professions of the International Council of Women.

IT is well-known that the Scandinavian countries belong to those States where women most perfectly have accomplished equality with men.

In Denmark women have political rights on quite the same terms as men. We have several women in our parliament (Rigsdag), and one of the cabinet ministers (for education) is a woman, Mrs. Nina Bang. She is the first woman made a cabinet minister in Denmark. Many women are elected members of the Municipal Councils and a woman has recently been nominated "Raadmand," that is to say, Vice-Lord Mayor of Copenhagen. More than 70 per cent of the women voters use their vote.

"Equal pay for equal work" is acknowledged as far as concerns all government and municipal services, and women are admitted to all positions on the same terms as men, except those in the church and in the army. The same opportunities for training are open to women as to men. It will be seen from this that the law gives the woman the same opportunities and the same rights as the man con-

cerning trades and professions.

In industrial and other private establishments men and women are not getting the same wages; sometimes it is because men and women do not exactly have the same job. In some trades where they exactly do the same work they get the same payment, in other trades not.

As to special legislation for women, there is only one provision, that forbidding the employment of a woman during the first four weeks after confinement. If such a woman is without any means, she can get a benefit which is not considered as poor relief. A bill to put into effect the fuller provision adopted by the Washington Labor Conference in 1919 has been introduced this winter but has not yet been passed. Another bill concerning working women has recently been introduced, dealing with prohibition of

night work. The different women's organizations do not support this bill, because in Denmark, which is primarily an agricultural and not an industrial country, and where the majority of the workers are organized and where the working hours have been shortened—not by law but by collective bargaining—night work has not shown special dangers for the women and the homes.

In spite of our good laws there is still left a good deal of work for the women's organizations; firstly, to get admission for the women to the ecclesiastical services; secondly, to educate the women in such a way that they will become more and more fitted for the higher positions and less reluctant to take the greater responsibilities, so that they may be, not only according to the law, on equal terms with men, but actually more and more in practice.

I shall only add that we, just this spring, have passed a new Marriage Law with equal rights and duties for husband and wife, similar to the Swedish law recently described in "Equal Rights."

A Voice From Scandinavia

By Gaeta Wold Boyer

A WOMAN of tremendous vitality, big vision and high ideals, blending with a practical working knowledge of world-problems; a woman fairly vibrant with sympathy one moment, and tingling with delicious humor the next, Fru Betzy Kjelsberg, of Oslo, Norway, cannot fail to be an inspiration wherever her eager smile is seen.

Not only in the things she has accomplished, but in the things she sees before her still to be done, and the surety with which she looks forward to their accomplishment, does one sense the indomitable will, the unswaying courage that fires others to "carry on." She speaks with the authority of study and experience on economic questions. Her understanding is quick; her advice is sound.

As Chief Government Factory Inspector of Norway, Fru Kjelsberg is familiar with women's economic problems and during her stay in Washington, in attendance at the quinquennial of the International Council of Women, she was an especially interested visitor and guest of the National Woman's Party. She was particularly concerned about the struggle for equal rights for men and women in industry in this country,—a condition which actually exists in her country.

"In Norway," she said, "the army and ministry are locked doors to women and many of us resent that. But in all other fields our opportunities are not hampered by sex. The laws are the same for men

and women and we are not bothered with this protective legislation you talk about. We have a 48-hour week for men and women alike in industry, which is divided into eight-and-a-half hour days for the first five days so as to leave a half holiday free on Saturday. No overtime can be exacted by the employer, except in case of emergency, and then only under the regulation of and with the consent of the Chief Inspector of Factories. Overtime must not exceed 10 hours a week or 30 hours a month. Thus is the nation's health and happiness preserved. In canneries, where the season is short, overtime may reach 15 hours a week in the height of the season.

"In our country the young are classed as children up to the age of 14, and as minors from 14 to 18 years. Employers do not like to engage children's labor, and the country permits it only with a special permit granted on application by the child with certificate from a physician. Minors, that is persons from 14 to 18 years, may work but are not permitted to do overtime.

"In the country districts children go to school every other day. In the cities, if a child gets permission to work he cannot work more than two hours a day during the school-year, for the compulsory school law requires him to be in school at least five hours, and another law for-

bids him to be occupied more than seven hours a day. Also he must not work for one hour before school—this to insure getting good meals with plenty of time for proper eating. So there is not much time left for an employer to make use of."

The work of Fru Kjelsberg has by no means been limited to securing a fair chance for women and children in her country. In every city there is a municipal factory inspection board of five members, working under the direction of the chief government inspector. Each of these boards must have at least one woman and one worker, with their alternates. The boards are responsible for the humanitarian, hygienic and sanitary conditions in their districts, and the men members, so says Fru Kjelsberg, are inclined to leave these questions to the women inspectors, so they are often in the position where they must make demands for men's welfare as well as for women's. Most of the problems of both sexes are identical.

"The only special legislation for women that we have," said the chief inspector, "is in the case of maternity. Women must not work for six weeks after the birth of the child, and it is her right if she so desires, to ask for four weeks leave before childbirth. She has a right to receive economic help from the community six weeks before and up to six months after the birth of the child if she is unable to help herself, and the community is obliged

to pay her. However, the remuneration does not, of course, equal the wages she could earn in a factory, and so it does not tend to keep her away from work when she is able."

Fru Kjelsberg was particularly pleased to see that the National Woman's Party was struggling for the proper recognition of the economic value of a housewife's services in the home.

"It is only through the insistent demand of women that this will ever be brought about," she said. "It is because of the firm demand of Scandinavian women that a Scandinavian Commission recently made the recommendations that resulted in the new Swedish Marriage Law of 1921, which is considered to be the most progressive marriage law in the world. The same proposal is now before our Parliament and it will almost certainly be adopted. It has made the tremendous contribution of putting the wife's work in the home on a high economic basis."

The law to which she referred and which was discussed in the May 23rd issue of EQUAL RIGHTS abolishes the old-time relation of the husband's guardianship over his wife. She may choose her own domicile, practice any trade or profession without his consent, and make contracts independently; any personal fortune or income, acquired previously to marriage, are at her own disposal, and she shares with her husband his property and earnings, and may object during marriage to his mismanagement or squandering of the common property. He has the same rights toward her. If both husband and

Norwegian Delegates Endorse Equal Rights

MEMBERS of the Norwegian delegation to the Quinquennial Meeting of the International Council of Women, in Washington, expressed great interest in EQUAL RIGHTS, when interviewed by a member of the National Woman's Party.

Fru Marie Idsoe of Stavanger, Norway, whose special interest is health work, is deeply interested in the Immigration Centennial, which is to take place in Minneapolis, Minn., June 7-9, since it was from her native city of Stavanger, that the first group of Norwegian immigrants, 53 in number, sailed June 4, 1825, for America in the ship Restoration. A baby girl was born on that long voyage and her proud descendants still live in Minnesota.

"In Norway, too," said Fru Idsoe, "there will be a celebration of this Centennial for the Norwegian-Americans who are visiting at home and the festival will begin at Stavanger, then will go to Oslo and other cities. The bond between our country and America is very strong for

wife have a personal income, both must contribute according to their ability to the home expenses, but if the wife gives all her work to her home, it is expressly stated that she thereby fulfills her duty as supporter of the family. She has a legal right to demand from her husband the money required for the maintenance of the household and family as well as for her special needs, and if the money is not forthcoming she may have a lien placed upon his income and the sum due will be paid direct to her. Parents are the joint guardians of their children.

Divorce, too, Fru Kjelsberg points out, is by this law made alike for men and women. The same grounds hold good for either sex.

In this economic value of woman's household work Fru Kjelsberg is deeply interested and she is an enthusiastic student of methods for modernizing and lightening the burden of these duties.

"In the production of food man has had every support from science and machinery," she said. "In the preparation of food woman has had no equivalent help. Machinery has been of enormous importance in the work of man while woman has derived little advantage from it. Engines and other contrivances could not formerly be constructed small enough for the home. The result was that the workers in the home became the step-children of the machinery age. But all this has now been changed. The science of nutrition has made enormous progress during and because of the war, and in electricity we have found the new form of energy which, rightly employed, enables us to fulfill the demand of science."

there are so many of us over here that there is scarcely a family at home that does not have relatives in the States. So we have been particularly interested in visiting this country and studying it, and we have enjoyed great hospitality and kindness. We are eager to learn what American women are doing and to exchange ideas with them for we, too, have given much attention to the welfare of women and we think that women should have equality with men. We have done much in Norway with our schools and hospitals and we are proud of them."

Fru Theo Holst, member of the Public Library Board, of Christiansand, spoke particularly of the labor laws of Norway and praised the work of Fru Kjelsberg, the National Inspector of Factories.

"Conditions in some of the industries, especially in the mines," she said, "were very bad formerly, with men and women living together in the same room. Now Fru Kjelsberg has changed all that, clean-

Needless to say, Fru Kjelsberg is actively interested in the time-and-labor saving devices that will release mental and bodily energy from household drudgery for constructive work outside the home. She wants to see housework lifted from its plane of all-day-and-half-the-night drudgery for women to the plane of science. And in a unique electrical stove whereby cooking is done with an enormous saving of time, labor and expense, she feels that a big part of the problem has been solved; feels it so keenly that she has even brought one of these marvelous "cookers" with her from Norway and is demonstrating its value as she goes.

In addition to being Chief Government Factory Inspector, Fru Kjelsberg is a member of the Royal Unemployment Commission, president of the Board of the Government Training School for Teachers of Domestic Economy, vice-president of the Norwegian Association for Social Work, member of the Central Board of the Left Political Party, and has been a government delegate to all labor conferences in Washington and Geneva. She received the King's Gold Medal for Merit in 1916, and the golden Badge of Honor from the Norwegian Women's Public Health Association, the same year. She is president of the Norwegian Council of Women and chairman of the International Committee on Suffrage and Rights of Citizenship. As a lecturer on social and political subjects, she is much in demand in her own country and during her stay in America has spoken before many assemblages.

ing up immoral conditions, insisting on healthful homes, sex segregation, wholesome food, reasonable working hours, and helping to get laws that would enforce these demands. In Norway there is not much industrial inequality. Men and women share responsibilities together and usually have the same opportunities."

Fru Inga Gjerdrum of Askengen, a farmer, said, "We are interested in the fine work you are doing here to get absolute equality for men and women. There is a little more to be done in that line in Norway, too, but our country has made rapid advances. No woman, however, is allowed to be a minister in our country though the other professions open their doors to her. This we are trying to have changed."

Froken Louisa Engen, prominent in political activities, of Bodo, in Northern Norway, said, "We have practically complete equality in our district far up North, especially industrial equality. That is as it should be everywhere."

Princesses, Ladies and Adventuresses of the Reign of Louis XIV

By Therese Louis Latour

Translated from the French by Colonel Dutton Burrard, C. M. O.

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Reviewed by Katherine Anne Porter

IN these sketches of twenty puissant mischief makers at the court of the Sun-King, Madame Latour has epitomized the century of courtiers.

Probably you will not find anything here which you could not find better told in the Memoires of Saint Simon, or the letters of Madame de Sévigné, but the author has gathered and sifted her material so expertly you find here in an orderly arrangement the essence of a thousand documents and letters. Madame herself is a discreet, moral-minded and modern French woman. But she has a fondness for the wild ladies she writes about, and gives their stories in a way that relates them to their times, to the king, to each other, and recreates their lively images in the imagination of her reader.

Her book received the grand prize for prose in the annual literary concourse in Marseilles, and no doubt deserved it. It is hardly possible to believe that the author wields so heavy a pen as her translator. The English prose is solid, airless and much better suited to the annals of a modern peace conference than the scandalous, spirited and desperate adventures of women living in a court and a century which somehow conjures up the vision of a masked ball given in a charnel house.

But the atmosphere comes through, in spite of the translation and the original tendency of Madame to mold the reader's point of view as she goes. She admires and apologizes for the odious Madame de Maintenon, and sentimentalizes Louise de la Valliere to the point of bathos. When her subject is a true, natural born sinner, she cannot refrain from pointing out that she would have been happier if she had been virtuous: when they fall, as all of them do sooner or later, she picks them up tenderly, brushes them off with care, and sets them up again to the best advantage.

Her good offices cannot dissipate the odor of the times: a mingled fetor of perfume and disease, of religious fanaticism and witchcraft, of minds driven by ambition which used all weapons in a struggle balanced perilously between life and death. Life was simply the favor of the king: all desired things flowed through the single channel of the throne. Death was exile or imprisonment: the theological hell, which is described simply as the absence of God.

If it seems nightmarish, and puerile too, it is well to remember that the affairs of France, and through France the European world, were once changed and often directed by the greedy will of these women, and even the adventuresses cannot be lightly dismissed as merely such. If de Montespan fed the King cantharides

THE gay, the careless, the intelligent and beautiful Ninon de Lenclos blows through this history like a clean wind. Ninon the Honest Man as she was called: she valued friendship more than love, yet she had more lovers than any woman of her time, and kept them all for friends when the fever-fit was over. She understood politics, and made no political intrigues. She was one of the most genuinely cultured women of her period, and she made witty fun of the précieuses, who took their learning so seriously. The Court reeked of the practise of black magic, but Ninon consulted no witches, she had her own magic which put her above the uses of the occult. She changed her lovers as lightly as she changed her dresses, but she had a quaint code of honor intimately her own, and a splendid health of mind. Many of these ladies, having failed at Court, turned to the bitter second choice of religion: exchanging libertinage for the terrors of the hair-cloth shirt. Not so Ninon. True, for her sins she was locked up in a convent for a time, but pray and repent she never did. Queen Christina of Sweden visited her in her convent, and they had a gay time scandalizing their contemporaries. The Queen was delightful, and pronounced her the most interesting woman she had met in France.

The mysterious cult of the witches, headed by Abbe Guibourg and La Voisin, plays an important role in the later stories. The dark web of magic bound together all layers of seventeenth century, society from the deepest squalor of crime to the highest and most corrupt. Madame Latour overlooks, or ignores, the religious significance of the witch cult, but tells dramatically the story of the investigations carried on by the Chambre Ardente, at the instance of the King, which led to the discovery of Madame de Montespan's relations with the cult, and to the summary suppression of the evidence against her, as well as the sudden conclusions of the investigations. It was the ruin of De Montespan, but the cult flourished for another half century.

These women were super-women in a sense different from the modern interpretation of the word. Lacking all human or legal rights not bound up with the family or the State, they laid irresponsible hands on international relations, and twisted the careful plans of diplomats to their own personal ends.

They deceived their husbands, and their lovers fought duels to prove the virtue of their mistresses. Madame the Duchesse de Buillon, one of the Mancini girls, was accused of practising witchcraft, and of attempting to poison her husband. He, in company with her lover, bore witness for her by escorting her to her trial. Most

in excrement as a love potion, and permitted the Abbe Guibourg, in the role of the Devil, to say the Black Mass over her naked body as an altar in order to win back the wavering loyalty of the Monarch, that is her affair: but her extravagances, her jewels and houses and balls, were impoverishing to France; and that poverty was to lead to revolution, and to the downfall of a dynasty.

THE record begins with Anne of Austria, mother of Louis XIV, secret wife of Cardinal Mazarin; and ends with the intriguing and megalomaniac dwarf, Duchesses du Maine, wife of de Montespan's eldest son by the King, legitimized and therefore a distant aspirant to the throne of France * * *. It includes the incredible histories of the five Mancini sisters, nieces of Cardinal Mazarin, Henrietta of England and the gallant Dauphiness, Duchesse de Burgogne, Ninon de Lenclos and Madame Sévigné.

Madame Latour attempts, and fails lamentably, to lend dignity and honor to the Duchesses de Montpensier, the absurd Grande Mademoiselle, daughter of Gaston D'Orleans; she was in word and deed surely the most comic woman figure in history.

Beginning her famous husband-hunt in her ninth year, she intrigued blindly all over Europe for a husband equal to her station, and ended at the age of forty-two by falling headlong in love with the Comte de Lauzun, with his "face of a skinned rabbit" and his merely respectably noble family. But in spite of his ugliness, Lauzun was a pet of the ladies, and he could not stand the plumed and gestured majesty of Mademoiselle. She got him into prison by marrying him privately—if it could be said that she ever did anything privately—and got him out again by endless machinations at court. Once free, Lauzun ran for his life from his too-royal spouse.

I shall not rehearse her comic war with Mazarin, nor her other military exploits. Her whole life was a muddled and pointless adventure, and when she died, the urn containing her very vitals burst in the presence of the mourners, the final preposterous gesture of Mademoiselle, artistically in keeping with all that preceded it.

of them were married in early adolescence, and they bore children copiously, tossing them off between masked balls, romantic assignations and terrible journeys by coach. Laced into steel corsets,

they danced and drank and ate all night and all day, yet if they escaped being poisoned, they lived to great old age.

This is really a splendid book, and it will spare a busy reader much groping

about through obscure biographies and collected letters * * * * the whole reign of Louis Fourteenth is here, set down accurately and with much feeling for the humanness of that all-too-human epoch.

News of the Conference

MARGARET WHITTEMORE, vice-president of the National Woman's Party, and Lucy Branham of the Teachers' Council, arrived in Detroit Monday, May 25, to confer with the officers of the Michigan Branch. They have been touring Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Ohio, Western New York and Michigan in the interests of the Midwestern Conference to be held in Detroit, June 4-7.

This conference will bring special emphasis to bear on equality in the trades and professions. It is the first time that equal industrial rights for men and women has been the keynote of an American conference.

Miss Branham has charge of the meetings in Detroit on Sunday, June 7, which will include a morning conference of the Industrial Conference at the Hotel Statler at 11 o'clock, and a public mass-meeting at 3 o'clock in the afternoon at McCollister Hall, Forest and Cass streets.

Mrs. Josephine Nevin Keal of Detroit will be chairman of the meeting and will emphasize the importance of equal opportunities in the professions and industries.

The speakers will be Madam Helene Romneciano, secretary of the International Council of Women; Mamie Santora of Cleveland, a member of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; Mrs. Mary Murray of Brooklyn, an employe of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Co., and Anna McCue of Philadelphia, who will stress the importance of "Equal Rights in the Industrial Field."

Madam Romneciano will tell of the work of European women, who are also striving for economic and political equality. She holds several national and international offices, and is general secretary of the World Union for International Concord, permanent delegate in Geneva of the Roumanian National Council of Women and representative of Roumania in the International Entente.

THE pageant, which depicts the story of women through all the ages struggling for equality, will take place on Saturday, June 6, at "Cranbrook," the estate of George G. Booth, Esq. The outstanding women of history who will appear before the gaze of the audience will be women well known in their particular field of endeavor. The prologue will be

read by Jessie Bonstelle, whose work in the theatrical field is exceeded by none. The first tableau opens with Mrs. E. E. Remington as womanhood. Episode I is called from Bondage to Freedom. The first figure is Queen Tiy of Egyptian fame, portrayed by Mrs. C. M. Holcker. Mrs. Calvin Pitts Vary will be Queen Vashti, and Sappho, whose fame has gone before her, will be done by Mrs. Louis Gomon. Then to the tune of the Tales of Hoffman twelve lovely young women will give a Grecian dance. In the Roman period, Mrs. Ralph Ainsworth will be Hortensia. Mrs. Richard T. Cudmore will be Mary Wollstonecraft of old England, and Miss Vivian Glauze will direct an historical dance of the period.

A flower dance will open Episode II, and then will follow the scenes with which we are more familiar, the Convention of 1848 at Seneca Falls. Mrs. Fred Vandevere will be Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mrs. John Gaffill, Lucretia Mott, and Mr. Frank Briscoe, James Mott, who presided over the memorable convention.

Episode III will show the beloved Susan B. Anthony, Mrs. James Black, with her friends being presented with flowers by little children. A group of fifty women from every nation in their native costume will follow this.

Episode IV brings us to the present time with the figure of Inez Milholland blazing the way. This lovely and vivid character, every inch a leader, will be played by Doris Stevens of New York City, the wife of Dudley Field Malone. Miss Stevens was an intimate friend of Inez Milholland, and it was into her arms she fell when she was taken mortally ill on the platform of the Los Angeles Auditorium before a huge audience which had come to hear her speak.

There will be wreath bearers, banner bearers, Indian families, colonial families and pioneer families; processions of business and professional women, and men and women in industry. Allegorical figures of Justice, Freedom and Liberty will be portrayed by Mrs. Fred Ashton, Mrs. Edgar James and Mme. Ostrawha.

Two Million Dollar Fund

Treasurer's Report

SHELDON JACKSON, *Treasurer*
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RECEIPTS of National Headquarters, December 7, 1912, to May 15, 1925, \$1,302,210.98.

Contributions, membership receipts and other receipts, May 15, 1925, to June 1, 1925:

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Mme. Helene Romneciano, Switzerland.....	59.00
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