

oracle of the club, of the sympathy freely extended him when his faithful, harassed-looking wife had suddenly died, after a season of housecleaning, when "she had done a good part herself." Childs had said, vauntingly, and in his heart William Horton all at once despised the man.

When after an hour Mr. Horton returned home, he had a large box in his hands, and Mrs. Horton laughed in spite of herself, yet with great tears in her eyes, when from its depths her husband produced a dress, a wonder of lace and ribbons.

"I made Foxton open his store and let me bring this home," he said, the perspiration raining over his face. "He thinks it's pretty near your fit, but says you can wear it to-day, and they'll make any needed alterations to-morrow. Bertram is going to serve a first-class dinner in our dining-room at six o'clock."

"How much was this dress?" asked Mrs. Horton. "I did not ask," replied her husband. "And Julie, he added, affectionately, "I shall never inquire into the exact cost of your things again. All the way to Bertram's, and all the way to Foxton's I was putting myself in your place, and I came to the conclusion that I should have thrown up the 'position' much sooner than you did."

"I hope I did nothing wrong," came Julie's sweet, solicitous voice.

"No; it was I, and I only who was wrong," said William Horton, right manfully. "I stand condemned before my own conscience, and I am only thankful your forced independence asserted itself before it was too late, my own dear little wife."

Mrs. Minerva Parker-Nichols.

BY MARY TEMPLE BAYARD.

Until it was announced throughout the length and breadth of the land that Miss Minerva Parker (now Mrs. W. I. Nichols) had achieved the distinction of being selected designer of the Queen Isabella pavilion for the World's Fair, I wonder how many women even in her own city knew of her?

I am reasonably sure that it will be a revelation to many even yet, to learn that she was the first woman to enter the profession of architecture, and that at this time she has few successful rivals. New York has but one, Boston one, Chicago one, and Rochester, N. Y., one. These comprise the list of notable architects of our sex so nearly as I have been able to learn.

I am afraid we do not inform ourselves or take sufficient interest in what our sex are doing outside of the social world. We are all well posted in regard to the dear four hundred of our respective cities, their fetes, their personal attractions, their costumes, coaches, coin and coquetry; and all the details of their every-day lives we read with ever-increasing interest. But why not, through the same medium, get acquainted with the bright, gifted women of a lesser number who have taken advantage of the new dispensation by fitting themselves for higher duties—women who have illustrated anew the fundamental law that success in any direction is not a matter of sex but of character and endowment. Of such women nearly every city has its full quota, women of whom any people can be boastful; but in Mrs. Minerva Parker-Nichols we have had an exemplification of woman in the business world whom the world now delightedly honors.

Judging by the success that has crowned her serious efforts it would seem that architecture is indisputably a work for woman, especially domestic architecture. Considering this particular field of work, its immense resources, its magnificent possibilities, its peculiar adaptability to women, the wonder grows that it had not been entered long before the subject of this sketch determined to turn her attention to the designing of beautiful homes.

Like all innovators she had many obstacles to overcome before reaching her present high standing professionally, but the fact of her being a woman, she assures us, never in any way handicapped her while pursuing her line of work. On the contrary, she reports only words of encouragement and good-fellowship, both on the part of the public and her fellow-architects; while among builders and mechanics there has seemed to be an added care in executing the work called for by her plans and specifications.

To make use of her own expression just here, "If women don't carry chips on their shoulders they won't get them knocked off," and I am sure that illustrates woman's situation in the business world. As a rule, men are broader minded and more lenient in their judgment in regard to the stepping aside from the ordinary pursuits of life than are women, many of whom still cling to the tradition of their grandmothers, that if a woman do anything besides trade at a counter, nurse a baby, or prink before a mirror, she must be unwomanly. If she give the bulk of her attention to letters she, of course, becomes a slovenly, unlovely literary crank, and an altogether undesirable wife or sweetheart. Or, if she learn a trade, especially one which up to that time has been monopolized by men, then she is judged coarse, vulgar, and unsexed.

To learn the utter fallacy of such old-time doctrine, and how certainly a woman can retain her natural grace and feminine sweetness in the business world, one needs to become acquainted with Minerva Parker-Nichols.

Although her dealings are almost entirely with men, and her association during the construction of her buildings is with foreign workmen largely, often of the coarsest types, yet she has not lost womanliness, nor fallen into the manlike either in manner or speech, but talks brick and mortar as glibly and sweetly as another woman would painting and embroidery.

Undoubtedly, Mrs. Nichols in a large measure inherited the taste and talent for her work, since her maternal grandfather, Seth A. Doan, a sturdy New Englander, was an architect and shipbuilder, and her mother worked with him at both trades until she became a good practical carpenter and draughtswoman.

Mrs. Nichols believes the student must have natural talent, and that no amount of study can make up for the lack of it. She expresses surprise that any one would think of taking up the work without adequate preparation; architecture being a business to be learned and thoroughly mastered, like any other, and the training important as that of a doctor, and in her opinion far more so than that of a lawyer. Her chief obstacle, she says, was to receive thorough technical architectural training in this country, a difficulty experienced by men as well as women.

After making a special study of industrial art modeling at the Philadelphia School of Design (of which school she is now a member of faculty), she entered an architect's office, just as a young man would have done, submitting to the drudgery of lowly work, working

up from the bottom, according to business methods, serving the required term of years to thoroughly master her profession, and then, with the true spirit of the present century woman, opened an office for herself and fearlessly, with a courage born of an intrepid spirit and confidence in her own ability, she hung out her shingle, bearing in letters that he who ran could read, MINERVA PARKER, ARCHITECT. And this in conservative Philadelphia!

That was about nine years ago, since which time her business, after the manner of things in fairy tales, has grown and grown until it has assumed giant proportions, and the wonder grows in the mind of all observers how one head can plan and execute so much. Her

and endowed with personal graces much beyond the ordinary, small wonder the deduction has been that she preferred her profession to a husband.

However, she is still a young woman, and looking much younger than she confesses to be. She has been grimly amused by careless paragraphers, publishing her as about twenty-two or twenty-five, and then invariably crippling this statement with another to the effect that her father fell fighting in defense of his country during the late rebellion!

In appearance Mrs. Nichols very closely resembles Mrs. Cleveland. Though no knight of the camera has ever been able to transfer the likeness to card-board, yet the resemblance, both in face and figure, remains.



MRS. MINERVA PARKER-NICHOLS.

work is now quite as comprehensive as that of any male rival, and reaches from Maine to Florida. One of her latest triumphs at home has been the building of the New Century Club House, a home for the women's club of that name, of which Mrs. Nichols is a member. The result of this work is thorough, and the directors have expressed their entire satisfaction with the building.

Ever since receiving the award of the design for the Woman's Pavilion at the Columbian Exposition, every spare moment has been devoted to Spanish architecture, and now her plans are perfected and are pretty generally known to the public; but for the benefit of the outstanding few who may read this, I offer a brief description.

When completed the building will be two stories high, with Spanish tile roof, and an interior fitted with apartments for the accommodation of women and care of their children during a visit to the Fair. There will be medical, press, and legal departments; ministers' room; parlors for notables, musicians, stenographers, architects, designers, milliners, tailors—in short, representatives of every trade, industry or profession engaged in by women. Also, writing and reception-rooms, an emergency department with trained nurses and remedies at hand, as well as physicians; a serving-room and children's day-nursery, with attendants on hand in case of need. The main entrance of this beautiful and complete building is to be of an imposing nature, ornamented by a grand statue of Queen Isabella of Spain, done by that gifted sculptress, Harriet Hosmer.

Notwithstanding Mrs. Nichols' own success, she does not strongly recommend her profession as a means of support for women, but naively says: "I think it is like matrimony, there are so many obstacles in the way, I should advise them to keep out. But if they have sufficient love and courage to attempt it, and will fit themselves for the work, I should be only too glad to extend the hand of fellowship to such fellow-workers."

As a preparatory course, she advises a high-school or college education; a thorough knowledge of mechanical and free-hand drawing, construction, geometry, perspective, historic ornament, in short, a four years' course at the Boston School of Technology, or at Columbia College, these being, to her mind, the best schools for these studies.

Apropos of the love and courage necessary for the married state, Miss Parker has found both, and last November I had the pleasure of seeing her married to the Rev. William I. Nichols, a scholarly young divine in charge of a Unitarian church in her own city. In writing to a friend of the approaching marriage, she said:—

"I am to continue my work, having arranged for a lecture at the School of Design the day before the fearful leap, and a business engagement the day after. I am not given to advancing theories and having to retract, therefore I cannot tell you that I propose working a revolution in matrimony, or emancipating all women through my own married example. But I do hope to arrange my domestic life so that it need not absorb the architect, for my work was never so interesting to me as it is at present, etc."

It had been a matter of wonderment among Miss Parker's friends as to why she never married, since, even in this age of high culture and higher education, her attainments were more than enough to "marry her off." A seductive conversationalist, a finished musician, an artist who has received "honorable mention,"

This likeness, in the days when both women wore bangs, was so pronounced that more than once people familiar with the ex-President's beautiful wife mistook Miss Parker for her. A clear, smooth complexion, eyes of which it is hard to tell the exact color, so changeable are they according to her mood, but always dark and flashing with intelligence; the red wine of health painting each cheek, a warm, vigorous, well-put-together being, a type of wholesome humanity, whose courage and strength would be sufficient adornment—and that describes the physical Mrs. Nichols.

In point of character she impresses one as having invincible industry, a fine sense of personal responsibility, a strong determination to fulfill just expectations at any personal sacrifice, a modest but firm appreciation of her own abilities, and a love for and fidelity to the highest and best aims in her chosen work.

When questioned in regard to the advisability of an especially designed gown for the business woman, as agitated by the Women's National Association, Mrs. Nichols said she had not found her present dress (which I assure you is always a *la mode*, from bonnet to boot), the least hindrance to the free and uninterrupted use of brain or limb, and that it is, in her opinion, largely a matter of taste and judgment how a business woman or any other woman should dress; and that our emancipation in this, as in every other department of life, rests within our own hands, and is not a matter for legislative enactment; sound doctrine, surely!

Have we not, then, as women, and as Americans in the contemplation of Minerva Parker-Nichols much of which to be proud? And more than anything else, do not her achievements, and does not the courtesy accorded her by her fellow-workers afford convincing proof that a position is waiting for every woman who will make herself capable of filling it?

Truly, it is a glorious thing to live in this age and be a woman—an American woman! The scope of her work was never so broad, nor so high, nor so untrammeled as it is to-day. It is now conceded by all just, unbiased, well-informed people, that woman's sphere is in whatever place her talents provide for her. But it was not ever thus. She has come to the front through much and almost insurmountable opposition; braved reproach and slander, literally fighting her way; trampling down, and in pugilistic language, knocking out every obstacle in her march toward the goal of her ambitions.

Said the tide to the sea-wall—I think I will go up where you are. Oh, no, said the sea-wall, you must not do that, for ages on ages you have come no higher than you now are. You must remain there, custom decrees it. Said the tide: But I think I will go. What the sea-wall replied we do not know, for it was not there.

Some Historic Daughters of America.

No. 8.

BY SARAH D. HOBART.

How many of the younger generation know that, within the territory of the United States, there existed, once, the independent commonwealth of Frankland,

or Franklin? The authorities differ as to the orthography.

This was in 1784, when the people of East Tennessee, rebelling against the government of North Carolina, under whose control they belonged, seceded and set up in business on their own account, electing as their first and only governor, Colonel John Sevier, a gallant leader in the memorable fight at King's Mountain.

Four years previous to this act of secession, Colonel Sevier married Miss Catherine Sherril, the daughter of a pioneer from the Yadkin river country, and brought her to reside over his home on the Nola Chukka river, and to care for his family of ten children.

Of this young lady it was said that, "she could outrun an antelope or outleap any woman; walk more erect and ride more gracefully and skillfully than any other female in all the mountain round about, or on the continent at large." A Greek nymph in prosaic American garb, her romantic adventures are worthy of a place in the future epic-poem of the republic.

Of her first meeting with Colonel Sevier, this account is given: In the Cherokee War of 1776, when the Sherrils had gone to Fort Watauga for protection, Catherine, with some companions, was wandering outside the defenses when they were surrounded by a body of Indians. Several of her companions were killed, while our heroine escaped only by her fleetness of foot. She leaped the palisade and landed in the arms of John Sevier.

The first work of the newly-made bride was to prepare the clothes which her husband and three stepsons wore in the battle of King's Mountain. Her biographer relates that she used often to say: "Had his ten children been sons, and large enough to have served in that expedition, I could have fitted them out."

Mr. A. W. Putnam, who is the author of a bright sketch of Mrs. Sevier, gives this bit of personal description:—

"She was tall in stature, erect in person, stately in walk, with small, piercing blue eyes, raven locks, a Roman nose, and firmness unmistakable in every feature. She was able to teach her children in the exercises conducive to health and usefulness, to strength of nerve and to action. None could with equal grace and facility, placing the hand upon the mane of a spirited horse, and standing by his side, seat herself upon his back or in the saddle. She had the appearance and used the language of independence, haughtiness and authority, and she never entirely laid these aside. Yet, her pride was not offensive, nor her words or demeanor intended heedlessly to wound. It could be said of her, without any question, that she 'reverenced her husband,' and she instilled the same Scripture sentiment into the minds of his children. The very high respect and deference which one of her dignified appearance ever paid to him, no doubt had a favorable influence upon others, for though he was a man of remarkable elegance of person, air and address, and of popular attraction, yet it must be confessed that she contributed much to all these traits and to his usefulness and zeal in the public service. She relieved him of his cares at home, and applauded his devotion to the service of the people."

Those were stormy days in which this priestess of liberty passed her novitiate. General Sevier's duties kept him much of the time from home, and his wife, with her children and slaves learned all the horrors of Indian warfare. She refused to take shelter with her family in the fort, saying that she "would as soon die by the tomahawk or scalping knife as by famine," and adding:—

"The wife of John Sevier knows no fear. I neither skulk from duty nor from danger."

As an illustration of General Sevier's patriotism, it is related that at the time when the paper currency of North Carolina was so depreciated that a hundred-dollar bill would hardly buy a "pone of corn-bread and a slice of ham," soldiers could always obtain liberal supplies at moderate rates at the Sevier homestead. After his death large sums of the valueless old Continental currency were found in his desk.

Upon the establishment of the State of Frankland, Governor Sevier's house became the rendezvous of the disaffected.

"It was proclaimed open and free," says the annalist, "to all the Friends of the rights of self-defense and independence, and the impressive dignity and noble bearing of Mrs. Sevier made a deep impression upon all who resorted to that home for counsel, aid or hospitality."

The rebellion was, however, of brief duration. Remonstrance failing, the Governor of North Carolina, spirited away the insubordinate general and arrested the leading offenders. Terms of arbitration were arranged: the State of Tennessee was set off from its parent commonwealth, and John Sevier chosen as its first governor.

For twelve years the governor's open house was known as "the rest of the weary, the asylum of the afflicted, the hospitable mansion of the first governor, the people's favorite."

Mrs. Sevier had borne eight children, and found herself with a brood of eighteen under her motherly charge. In the busy life she had known there was little opportunity for study, and her education, says her biographer, "was such as she acquired chiefly from reading the Bible, hearing the wild birds sing, and the Indians' powwow."

"I picked up a good deal," she says, "from observation of men and their acts, for that was a business with us in the early settlements, and we examined the works of nature to some advantage; but as to school education, we had precious little of that, except at our mother's knee."

John Sevier died in 1815. Then began for his wife a period of isolation and retirement rivaled only by the devotion of Martha Washington to her husband's memory. Removing to Middle Tennessee, in the wild and romantic country near the Obeds river, she built herself a home on the mountain-side, in the deep woods, miles from any human habitation.

The log-cabins constructed for herself and her slaves were of the most primitive kind. She dressed always in half-mourning, and her husband's hat was hung conspicuously on the wall.

"She never forgot," says her biographer, "that she was the widow of Governor and General Sevier, that he had given forty years of his life to the service of his country, and in the most arduous and perilous exposure, contributing from his own means far more than he ever received from the public treasury; and yet he never reproached that country for injustice, neither would she murmur nor repine."

The most valued treasure kept from her palmy days, was an imported carpet, some twelve by fifteen feet in size, which had been presented to her as the "first governor's wife," and was the first article of the kind ever laid upon a "puncheon" floor west of the Alleghany mountains. This was always brought forth and

Bayard, Mary Temple. "Mrs. Minerva Parker-Nichols." *Daughters of America* 6.8 (1892): 8.
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