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MARIA MITCHELL, LL.D

Maria Mitchell, the noted astronomer, died on June 28, 1889. She was the daughter of William Mitchell, a well-known astronomer of Nantucket, Massachusetts. His daughter was born on August 1, 1818, and at the age of eleven years, began to assist her father in his astronomical work. Night after night she spent in the study of the stars. She soon surpassed her father in the energy and zeal with which she prosecuted her work, and especially her search for comets. In 1847 her efforts were rewarded, and she at once became famous. For her discovery of a comet the King of Denmark sent her a gold medal.

In 1858 she visited Europe, and inspected the principal observatories of Great Britain and the Continent. She was the honored guest of Herschel and of Sir George B. Airy, the British Astronomer Royal, at Greenwich. She was also the guest of Le Verrier in Paris and Humboldt in Berlin, and received high honors wherever she went.

On her return home Miss Mitchell was presented by the women of America with a telescope much larger than any used by her father.

Miss Mitchell was the first woman to be elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She always took a prominent part in the movement to elevate woman's work and presided at the meetings of the American Association for the advancement of Women in Syracuse, in 1875, and in Philadelphia in 1876. She was a member of various scientific societies; the American Association for the Advancement of Science elected her a member in 1850, and a fellow in 1874. In 1852 the degree of LL.D. was conferred on her by Hanover College, and in 1887 by Columbia.

Private plans and investigations were laid aside when, in 1865, she entered upon her professorship of astronomy at Vassar College. For twenty-four years she has given her best thought and effort to advancing the interests of the college through her department. To make the department a strong one and live one, yet thorough and scholarly, and to make the observatory scientific in all its appointments, and worthy to be compared with any other of its size in the country, have been her impelling aims. To make the astronomical department independent and self-supporting was her heart's desire.

Toward this end, by personal solicitations, she raised \$5,000, but further efforts on her part were prevented more than a year ago by failing health.

Since her death, arrangements have been

made to raise, with this \$5,000 as a nucleus, the sum of \$40,000 calling it the "Maria Mitchell Endowment Fund," and with it establish an astronomical chair at Vassar in her honor, and a half of the sum has already been raised.

A STORY FOR YOUNG MEN.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

"My vessel will sail in a few days now, so I shall start on my tramp to New London to-morrow, and I thought I would come in to say good-by and give Jared, here, this book to make him think of me

floor, working out problems in mathematics of his own improvising with a bit of charcoal upon the smooth stone hearth, sprang to his feet, eagerly took the book from the old sailor's hand, and cried out, "Oh, thank you, thank you, Uncle Barzil," and dropping down again in front of the fire-light, was lost in the magical pages.

The old man laughed and nodded at the boy's mother. "Just like his grandmother, my sister Bertha, your mother," he said. "She used to read everything she could lay her eyes on, and she wrote some proper good verses, to my thinking. You like to read about places and things,

he studied the heavens from the hilltops, and the whole solar system seemed to be revolving in the boy's active brain. He drew maps, diagrams and charts with a pointed stick in the hard-trodden earth in front of his mother's door, or bits of charcoal did duty on the sunny doorstep and the stone hearth.

When the pumpkins began to form on the sprawling vines that bordered the corn-fields with their huge, prickly leaves and flaunting yellow blossoms, he watched them with eager interest, and one after another was picked, not to be fashioned into that delight of most boys, a jack-o'-lantern, but to be transfixed with a flax spindle and made to revolve inside his mother's three-legged iron pot.

But the vegetables withered and decayed, and the pot was brought into requisition for cooking the dinner, and Jared cast about in his mind how he was to procure a globe of less perishable material. There was a turning-lathe of old Moses Slafter's, some two miles off, and up the valley the resolute youngster went with no loitering steps, and succeeded in procuring a wooden ball about as large as his black, curly head. This was a treasure indeed, and over the white, polished sphere he spent many a delightful hour in drawing in ink the meridian and parallel lines, the various divisions of land and water and all the minute geographical diagrams.

The old stone chimney and hearth, the only relics of his mother's humble dwelling on that lonely roadside, but a few minutes' walk from where I am writing, now moss-grown and fern-embowered, might, could they talk, tell the story of the perfecting of this piece of patient, skilful labor. I have the honor of its possession, the precious heirloom being frequently admired by visitors to my library. The parallels and meridians are drawn and numbered with a hot pointed iron; the grand divisions are traced in ink; the axis is a coarse knitting-needle, and the pine frame upon which the ingeniously constructed globe is suspended is whittled out and carefully dovetailed together with a pocket-knife. A rather crude affair taken altogether, but a wonderful piece of mechanism when we take into account that it was made nearly a century ago by a child of ten who had never seen any apparatus of the kind, and had nothing to guide him in its constructions except the ideas he had gained from that meagre and abstruse book "Uncle Barzil," the old sailor had given him.

This wonderfully bright and studious boy, who afterwards became one of the most distinguished scholars of his day, was Jared Sparks. The place of his birth and



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once in a while," and the old sailor, Barzil Waterman, took from the pocket of his heavy pea-jacket a thin, blue, paper-covered little book. "I bought it at a stall in Liverpool one day when the old "Martha Taylor" put in there and we got leave to go on shore. I took the notion into my head I might study it some, but I couldn't make head or tail of the gibberish. I find it is easier for me to pick up what navigation I need as I sail along than it is to learn it out of a book."

A little black-eyed, curly-headed lad, who was lying flat upon the white, sanded

but I would rather go and see them. I suspect Jared will do both, and write about what he has heard and seen as likely as not; but he has got something now to study on for one while. He won't conquer that book right away, if the school-master does say he's got the better of every arithmetic book in town, so far."

If the bright boy did not conquer the science of navigation, he did its history, from the days of Medina and Cortes, and from a supplementary nautical almanac he was able to understand how the science was made available to seamen. On clear nights