

THE WOMEN'S PAGE

RUSSIA'S PIONEER WOMEN WORKERS



A Family Group, Showing Miss Martha Wenski (left) and Her Sister (right), Who Conduct a Training School at Lodz.



Martha Krautman (right) and Amelia Grossman, Pioneer Social Workers at Odessa.

The Intrepid Educators Who Have Striven Nobly to Infuse New Life Into the Feminine Slavs

OVER their samovars of tea, when Russia was in the throes of war and virtual revolution, the feminine students of the land of the czar gave encouragement to the young men who were planning the overthrow of the old order of things. Nothing came of it but talk.

Only a few years later more practical evidences of the new thought came into being. This time it was not in the form of firebrand speeches, but in plain, simple work among the poor.

Cultivated Russia is one thing; the vast land of the common people is another. They are separate and apart, though of the same nation. But this latest awakening is destined to bring them closer together. For the social worker has made her appearance. The woman who goes into the dwellings of the poor and nurses their sick, teaching them, at the same time, how to avoid ill health by sanitary living—this is the new woman of Russia, and she is one of the greatest of innovations the czar's people have known for many, many years.



Russian Nurses Who Were Educated in Germany

have noticed the broader sphere of a woman's life and the professional and business opportunities that are open to the girls, such as being school teachers, trained nurses and stenographers.

"In Russia these duties are not considered a woman's. She can either work in a mill or stay at home. In the country districts the peasant maids and matrons labor on the farms.

"One of the greatest needs of the country is female school teachers. The mothers have recognized this for years, but until recently nothing had been done. Even the little tots, boys and girls, are taught by men, who naturally haven't the same tender influence over them that a woman would have."

Miss Martha Wenski, the daughter of Frederick Wenski, a wealthy brick manufacturer and builder of Lodz, was among the first to become interested in this work. She came to this country and took a three-year course in the Chicago Training School, and visited all the large cities of the country, investigating the educational facilities and the work carried on by the women's settlement houses. She inspected tenement houses in particular, as there are a great number of them in the large cities of Russia, and noted the conditions of the model homes, in contrast to those where the comfort of the tenants is not taken into consideration.

Miss Wenski was particularly impressed by the work of the women's clubs in looking after the welfare of the poor, and one of her first steps was to organize a similar institution in Lodz, to which some of the most prominent of her countrywomen belong.

On her return to Russia she opened a school in Lodz with one hundred girl pupils. The curriculum resembles that of an American academy.

The success of this institution will no doubt mean the founding of many similar ones throughout Russia. Miss Wenski would like to broaden her work, but her only assistant is her sister, Miss Alma. Encouraged by her success, she is already planning to send several young women to this country next year to qualify themselves for normal work. One of these, a young Jewish woman, will come to Philadelphia next fall.

Lodz was the best city in which to start a work of this kind, for it is a great manufacturing place, and is called the Manchester of Russia. Many of its women have literally lived in factories from girlhood.

Another woman has recognized the need of Christian work in Lodz. She is Miss Bertha Eden, of Warsaw, who opened the first training school in Russia for nurses. Female nurses have never been tolerated in Russia, and they are not to be found in any of the hospitals. But many Russian girls have had a desire to care for the sick, so they went to

exceptionally bright, and it was no time at all until she became a "mother," or head nurse. She figured out that if the Russian women were in so much demand in Germany, they could be just as useful in their native land. So she went to Lodz, taking fifteen Russian nurses with her, and opened a training school. Her nurses would be called settlement workers in this country, for they not only attend to the sick, but go into the homes of the poor and show the people how they can better their condition, teach mothers how to care for their babes and see that the children are sent to school.

The movement is handicapped because the girls in training cannot get the needed experience in hospitals; but they are placed in private homes and the trained nurses superintend their work. There are about a hundred students at present.

The nurses are never at the nursery. As soon as they are through one job, another is waiting for them. They not only go into homes, but also visit factories. If they learn that a girl is not in condition to work, they immediately report the case to the firm and get permission for her to go home for a rest. The mill hands have already found that the nurses are their friends, and are quick to report brutal treatment or lack of sanitation to them.

NURSE RICH AND POOR

"The pioneer nurses are of service to all classes of people, the rich as well as the poor," says the Rev. Mr. Alf. "Of course, the poor people are not charged anything; and, for that matter, these noble women prefer to devote their energies to the unfortunate who cannot afford even the necessities of life, not to mention the luxuries."

"The work has already become so great that the force of trained women cannot handle the hundreds of cases that come under their notice, and it is expected that their number will soon be supplemented by other Russian and Polish women from Germany, who cannot join their sisters until the terms for which they have contracted to work have expired.

"At Odessa the work has been taken up on a smaller scale by Miss Amelia Grossman and Miss Miriam and Don rivers. The Cossack girls have never received much schooling. They are trained, as their brothers, to be great fighters and horsewomen. Education is only a secondary matter. Few women in the world can stand as much. They can ride for days at a time without getting tired. Indeed, some of them can outdo their brothers and have not been of steel. They think that at least some restrictions should be put on the strenuous activities of these girls; that women are not born to be fighters. But they should be put on the same level as their hearts rather than the desire for combat. It would not be surprising to see a school for them founded very shortly. Several officers have been interested in the movement and have given their support."

"Although fifty or sixty families often live in one house, the conditions in some places are far better than in this country; but then again there are buildings that are terrible."

The next efforts of these Christian women will probably be directed toward the Cossacks on the Kuban and Don rivers. The Cossack girls have never received much schooling. They are trained, as their brothers, to be great fighters and horsewomen. Education is only a secondary matter. Few women in the world can stand as much. They can ride for days at a time without getting tired. Indeed, some of them can outdo their brothers and have not been of steel. They think that at least some restrictions should be put on the strenuous activities of these girls; that women are not born to be fighters. But they should be put on the same level as their hearts rather than the desire for combat. It would not be surprising to see a school for them founded very shortly. Several officers have been interested in the movement and have given their support."



Gathering of Social Workers and Teachers of South Russia

Great Women Behind Many Famous Men



Mrs. T. P. Gore, Her Husband's Eyes.



Mrs. Gertrude Lowther, Who Helped to Make Her Husband Famous in Diplomacy



Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Her Husband's Greatest Aid

averred that much if not all of his success in trade should be credited to his wife, while of the energetic old commodore the anecdote of his first great start is among the most treasured in the Vanderbilt family.

His wife was looking after the humble hotel they had been running when he was well nigh distracted for the cash he needed to embark upon his early steamship enterprise. The Vanderbilt credit was very different from what it became in after years, and the commodore always hated to let anybody into the subcellar he was digging for himself.

"How much do you need?" asked his wife.

"Oh—with that disarming tone men have for any one who can't help them on the spot—"I need thousands."

"Well," she rejoined, "if \$5000 is enough, I can give it to you. That is what I've saved out of the hotel thus far."

That \$5000 was the most important, critical step toward the famous Vanderbilt millions.

But these are trade instances purely. About the feminine instinct for affairs there appears to be a genius that is peculiarly adaptive, nowhere more in evidence than in diplomacy and the negotiations that call for combined tact and planning.

The debt which Lord Curzon owed to the millions of his wife, who was Mary Leiter, was too well known to need comment, and perhaps the credit might be given her wealth rather than herself. But she did, nevertheless, make him viceroy of India. A case that leaves the wife distinctly responsible for her husband's success is that of Lady Gerald Lowther, who, as Alice Blyth, brought to the modest young Washington attaché of Great Britain's embassy her beauty and her supreme gift for smoothing diplomacy's often troubled paths. These were her best dowry, although she was by no means lacking in fortune. Since her marriage, he has attained the knighthood that gives him the noble prefix and has risen to the difficult post of British minister to Turkey.

A parallel in American affairs, far more impressive, is that of Senator Gore, whose blindness has made him totally dependent on his wife. Literally, Mrs. Gore has been his standby and his guide.

One can take the wildest extremes and find the wife the power that has often been behind great men in all walks of life. General Russell A. Alger, in this country, used to delight in saying that to his wife he owed the very beginnings of his career—and they went back to log-cabin days. No stanger contrast could be found for the Alger than that of the dramatist Sardou, with its setting of French art and intrigue on the stage.

With all his genius Sardou could not force his way into the theaters that alone could give him opportunity for fame. But Mme. Sardou could do it for him. She made friends with the popular and influential actress, Mlle. Dejazet; and when the time was ripe, she implored the actress to make a hearing for the author. At Dejazet's word, the reluctant theater doors flew open, and the world has since acknowledged that the man whom his wife's tact brought to the fore was its supreme creator of masterpieces of stagecraft.

TO ARGUE WITH THE CZAR

But there is still hope. Three prominent clergymen are on their way to St. Petersburg to have a private audience with the czar and present their views on the all-important subject. The ministers are the Rev. Dr. MacArthur, pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church and president of the American Baptist Alliance; the Rev. Russell H. Conwell, pastor of the Baptist Temple, Philadelphia, and the Rev. F. B. Meyer, of London.

These men are all strong champions of women's rights, in the sense that they should have the privileges of higher education and be allowed to teach the young, attend to the sick, work for the social betterment of humanity and enlighten their less fortunate sisters.

Doctor Conwell only recently opened his church for the exclusive use of women at stated times, and it has gained the name of the "Women's Church." He is also president of Temple University, which is a co-educational institution.

When these three able divines present their views to the czar and show him the mammoth work that has been done by women in this and other countries, it is possible that the czar will relent and give his permission for the erection of the St. Petersburg institution. The signing of such a decree would mean a great change in the conditions of Russia.

A small band of pioneers is already at work interesting girls in professional and business careers and laboring among the poor to better their social conditions. A woman's college would greatly benefit their efforts and spread the work to all the large cities in Russia. A strong foundation for the movement has already been laid in Lodz and Odessa, and it is being rapidly built upon.

GIRLS ARE HANDICAPPED

The situation in Russia is being keenly watched by the Rev. Gustav Alf, a Russian minister who is doing evangelistic work among his fellow-countrymen in America. His wife was one of the leaders in the "new woman" movement, and had gone to Germany to be educated for that purpose. She was married in Odessa, on the Black sea, two years ago, and returned with her husband to Philadelphia. She is looking forward to joining in the work again upon their return to Russia in a year or two.

"A young woman is handicapped in every way, as far as education is concerned, in our country," the Rev. Mr. Alf said recently. "Eight years' schooling is considered enough for any girl, and a great deal of that is spent in gymnasiums. The Russian government considers that if a lass is strong physically and develops into a strong, healthy woman, it is sufficient. Her mentality isn't considered. She isn't supposed to have brains.

"The physical education is all very well, but our women are opening their eyes. They want something more. Those who have traveled in other countries

IT IS being acknowledged these days that women have some business sense. They have been buying for stores so shrewdly, running big ranches so energetically, advertising so successfully, and even conducting factories and stores of their own so astutely, that the old tradition of their incompetency is disappearing.

A new generation, with different training and greater opportunities.

That's what the half-converted critics admit, as if a few years or so could change in a lifetime a nature it took all history to fashion.

ONE of those candid husbands is John D. Rockefeller. He gives nearly all the credit for his wealth to his wife.

Here and there, through the pages of that history—through those pages which are still in the making—glint lights on the ability woman shows under the very condition when she is supposed to have no initiative at all.

Here and there a husband will drop the grandeur of solitary achievement that invests him and admit that he owes as much to his clever wife as he does to himself. Here and there some distinguished career, in its very bends and stages, will show the unmistakable hand of the woman that made it.

a time her advice ran counter to ideas of mine; but her judgment invariably proved better than my own. She has known every detail of my business transactions from the very beginning of my career. When our oil dealings were so small that we couldn't afford to have bookkeepers, Mrs. Rockefeller kept the