

# Letters from a senator's wife, by Frances Parkinson Keyes

LETTERS FROM A SENATOR'S WIFE

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LETTERS FROM A SENATOR'S WIFE BY FRANCES PARKINSON KEYES AUTHOR OF "THE CAREER OF DAVID NOBLE," "THE OLD GRAY HOMESTEAD," ETC.

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*To The First Two Presidents of the Ladies of the Senate Lois Kinsey Marshall and Grace Coolidge with most sincere affection*

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**LETTERS FROM A SENATOR'S WIFE**

Washington, D. C. December 6.

Dear Mary,

When I came home from the Capitol this evening I found your letter lying on top of about twenty others that were waiting for me on my desk. I have read it through twice, and now, though I'm pretty tired, I'm going to answer it before I go to bed.

The first part of it interested me very much. But, after you'd told me what you were doing yourself, you finished your letter with a paragraph that made me feel very badly indeed.

"I suppose all this seems very trivial to you now," you wrote. "Every time I hear from you—and that's usually indirectly—you're doing some wonderful thing or meeting some wonderful people, and I'm afraid that the Connecticut Valley is beginning to seem pretty provincial to you, and that you'll forget your country cousins and your old friends. Yet not long ago you were living on a farm, just as I am, pretty lonely at times, after having grown up in a big city, trying hard to be public spirited and progressive in your own village but finding it uphill work, partly because you had so much to do at home for the children, and partly because you hardly ever saw any women who came from the center of things, and could give you the benefit of their knowledge and experience and vision. I remember you said once that you felt as if you were 'mentally starving' sometimes; and that if the time ever came when you stopped being hungry, so to speak, you'd share your feast with your friends whom you'd left behind. Have you forgotten?"

Mary, dear—first of all—I shall never forget my "country cousins and my old friends." Wherever I go, and whatever I do, they will be very near and very dear to me always.

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Sometimes great waves of homesickness come over me, and I feel as if I'd give anything if I could drop all I'm doing and take the train for home. But of course I can't because my job is here now, just as much as yours is on the farm. And that brings me to the second thing that I want to say—I certainly haven't forgotten the years when I lived on a farm, too—most of all I haven't forgotten that I felt “mentally starved” sometimes, and longed for the encouragement and stimulation that comes from the contact with women who are doing what we call the “big things”—though, as a matter of fact, there's nothing bigger in my mind, than what you're doing every day of your life! I do want to share, now that I'm in “the center,” not only with you, but with all my old friends, for that matter. If I write to at least one of you every month, won't you send the letters to each other? And won't you all, in return, write to me telling me what *you're* doing, and what interests you most in what I'm doing?

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My experiences as a new senator's wife began, I shall always feel, as I sat at the telephone, the cold perspiration running down my spine, taking in the primary returns from all over the state of New Hampshire, as they were sent in to me from Republican Headquarters on September 3, 1918. This was not the first time that I had taken an interest, too personal to be entirely comfortable, in the primaries, for, almost exactly two years earlier, when Harry was running for Governor of New Hampshire, I had gone through a similar experience. But this time the vigil at the telephone seemed a much longer and harder one than on the previous occasion; the returns, instead of being sent to me direct from the different cities and towns, were sent first to Republican State Headquarters, and then from there to me. There were intervals, sometimes an hour long, between reports; and my husband, instead of being safely occupied at the Town Hall, was pacing up and down the room, tired after a hard campaign—for it is no joke to be the “war governor” of a state and run for the United States Senate at the same time!—and inclined to take a gloomy outlook on life in general and on the primaries in particular. It was not

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until four in the morning that I answered the telephone for the last time, and turned to him almost sobbing out what I had to tell him.

“They say at Headquarters that you've won by a handsome margin.”

He snatched the receiver from me. “What do you *call* a handsome margin?” he shouted; and then we burst out laughing together.

Not long afterwards he had the rather unusual experience of signing—as governor—his own appointment—as senator; and on the 19th of May, 1919, he “took his seat” in the United States Senate.

The “swearing in” of new senators is a simple and impressive ceremony. Each junior senator is taken by the senior senator from the same state to the Vice President, who shakes hands with him, and standing there he repeats the words of his oath of office—“I — — do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office in which I am about to enter. So help me God.” Then he goes and, literally, “takes his seat.” The Senate chamber, unlike the Supreme Court chamber, is far from being a beautiful or impressive apartment—it is very old, very dingy, and very poorly ventilated, as the new senator's wife soon discovers as she sits, glorying, of course, in her husband's achievement, but at the same time sweltering, in the gallery reserved for senators' wives. This “reservation” is not as strictly observed as it might be; and, unless she goes very early on the days when especially interesting speeches are being made or unusually noteworthy events are taking place, she is likely to find herself left out in the cold. I was rather amused, on my own first visit, to find six Sisters of Charity sitting calmly on the back row! And there is a story of one woman who went there, saying she was Senator So-and-

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So's wife, only to be told by the bewildered doorman that he could not let her in—that Senator So-and-So had three wives there already!

But in spite of the bad air and close quarters, she misses a great deal if she does not go to her gallery often, for history is made fast in the United States Senate nowadays, and she never will forget the impression made upon her by the speeches she hears delivered, and the measures she sees passed (and, incidentally, she can learn more of practical politics and civil government there in one week than she can from any book written on those subjects in a year). The occasion which has, so far, impressed me most, on account of my personal interest in it, took place on Lincoln's birthday last year. It has for many years been customary, on that day, to have the Gettysburg address read; and the original manuscript of this address belongs to my husband's family. So, at the request of Mr. Lodge, who had learned that "the senator from New Hampshire" had the immortal document in his possession, it was read by him, for the first time in the Senate, from the original. The event aroused so much comment, and was considered so noteworthy, that a copy of the address, together with the "proceedings of the day," a picture of the Lincoln Memorial and one of Barnard's statue of Lincoln, were all incorporated in a "Senate Document," beautifully printed on heavy paper, and given to all the senators to distribute among their constituents.

The first difficulty that besets a new senator's wife when she arrives in Washington is the necessity of finding a place in which to lay her head, and the heads of the members of her family. Since the beginning of the War, Washington has been badly overcrowded, and this condition has not improved much since the cessation of hostilities, for, as in most other places, the amount of building done has not kept pace with the increase in population. So that, even if she has not the question of expense to consider, it may take her some time before she can find any sort of an abiding place that is suited to her needs. And, of course, she usually *does* have the question of expense to consider, in a greater

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or lesser degree. There is, moreover, no city in the country, except New York, where her money, even if she has a good deal of it, will go so short a distance.

So, as I have said, the new senator's wife begins her official life in Washington with a weary search for a house or an apartment, which sometimes lasts for weeks, and which finally ends in her taking, in desperation, "something that will do"—that she tries to make herself think will do, resolutely shutting out the memory of the comfortable, sunny, pleasant home which she has left behind her—and pays for it a rental price on which she could live in comparative luxury in her own state. Then she moves in, and, with boiling water, antiseptic soap and carbolic acid, endeavors to make it fit for her family to live in, according to her standards—which are, apparently, very different from those of the tenant who preceded her. My own experience with a furnished apartment in one of the largest, newest, and most beautiful apartment houses in the city, I thought at first too dreadful to describe in detail—soiled linen left on the beds, 7 rubbish of all sorts in the bureau drawers, spoiled food in the refrigerator, to mention a few of its minor drawbacks to comfort—but I found, before long, that it was mild indeed compared to that which some other women have undergone. She is lucky if she does not have to do a good share of this scrubbing herself, for, as a stranger in a strange land, she has no idea where to turn for help, and no one dreams, unsolicited, of turning to help her. Her round of scrubbing, however, is prevented from becoming irksome by the trips which she makes, almost continuously, to the telephone. Her arrival has been announced in the society columns of the Washington papers, and every charitable organization in town is quick to ask her for a donation, the executive committee of every ball that is being arranged wishes her to act as a patroness—and to pay ten dollars for the privilege of doing so—and every photographer wishes her to pose for her picture. I was stung to such desperation by their demands, that I finally resorted, without the slightest compunction, to falsehood.

"Have you ever seen me?" I inquired in measured tones.

"No, madam," came back the even voice from the other end of the wire.

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“Well, I am over seventy years old; and I weigh two hundred and fifty pounds; and I haven't had a new dress in five years.”

I heard a slight gasp, followed by a faint murmur that “something could probably be draped” around me.

“My figure would not lend itself to draping,” I said, gaining courage as I went along, “you'd be terribly disappointed.”

Before her house is cleaned, the new senator's wife has begun to have callers. My first one arrived about ten minutes after I did, and climbed over the trunks and packing boxes which almost filled the front hall without concern. It had not occurred to me to say that I was “not receiving,” even if I had had time to do so. It had always been a matter of pride to me that I had never refused to see a caller unless I was actually sick in bed, and while Harry was Governor of New Hampshire, my callers were one of my greatest joys. I had no regular “day at home,” except one large formal reception each year, but every day that I was at home, tea was served at five, and anywhere from two or three to a dozen visitors came in to take it with me. But the new senator's wife, arriving in Washington, finds no such delightful experience in store for her; the system of official calling has all been cut and dried for years, and she must accept it with what grace she may. As soon as possible after her arrival she must “leave her card” at the White House; and she must make “first calls,” in person, on the Vice President's wife, the wife of the Speaker of the House, the wives of the members of the Supreme Court, and the wives of foreign ambassadors (and it is a rather interesting fact that the wives of all but one of the European ambassadors now in Washington are American women), as well as on the wives of all senators who have been in office longer than her husband. And she must return the first calls that are made upon her by the wives of the Cabinet officers, 9 by congressmen's wives, by the wives of the secretaries and undersecretaries and ministers and lesser lights of the diplomatic corps, and by members of “resident society.” She must do all this, moreover, not when the inclination happens to seize her, but at certain definitely defined times



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and seasons. “Supreme Court ladies” receive on Mondays; “Congressional ladies” on Tuesdays; “Cabinet ladies” on Wednesdays; “Senatorial ladies” on Thursdays—and here the mighty question arises, and must be settled, whether she will stay in and receive herself, or fare forth and call on other senators' wives; “Diplomatic Corps ladies” receive on Fridays. And since there are forty ambassadors and ministers, ninety-six senators, and more than four hundred congressmen, and since the greater part of these gentlemen are married, a very simple problem in arithmetic—that is, it looks simple on paper!—soon shows the new senator's wife that even if she goes calling every day during the season when she is not otherwise definitely engaged, from half-past three to half-past six, driving in a motor as fast as the traffic regulations will permit, and limiting each call to five minutes, she can hardly hope to do all that is expected of her. I made six hundred and fifty calls during my first season (the wife of one Cabinet officer told me she made over twelve hundred during hers), spent more than fifty dollars on visiting cards, and more on my taxicabs than on my food; but I left town, the first of June, still owing a great many. I am neither shy nor sensitive—indeed, I am extremely fond of society, and have been used to it all my life; but I found those first calls—that process of explaining my presence to hostesses 10 who had never seen me, and usually had never even heard of me before, very difficult; but the worst part of it, to me, seemed the futility of it all—it was like going around in a squirrel cage. No matter how attractive and distinguished a woman came to see me—and Washington is full of attractive and distinguished women—I did not have a chance, in all probability, to exchange a dozen words with her; and when I went to her house, it was even more crowded than my own had been. All impressions were blurred by haste, by crowds, and by unutterable fatigue. I felt, for a time, as if I should soon have an immense, new visiting list, without the name of a single person on it whom I knew well enough to call my friend. But in this I was mistaken. It is possible to make real friends, even in Washington.

While she is making her first calls, the new senator's wife is also going to her first luncheons and dinners, and she is a fortunate woman indeed if, during the process, she

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breaks none of the rules of precedence, which are even harder and faster than the rules for official calling. She may—and does—learn without much difficulty—indeed, if she has given the matter any thought, she has probably realized it before she went to Washington—that a senator's wife outranks the wife of a congressman, and an ambassador's wife the wife of a minister; but she probably has attached very little importance to this, and supposed that it ended about there. Far from it! The wife of the senior senator outranks the wife of the junior senator from the same state, and the wife of a senator from a neighboring state who has been longer in office, outranks 11 them both! The wife of the Secretary of State outranks the wife of the Secretary of Agriculture; the Vice President's wife outranks them all! And woe to the woman in official life who does not read, mark, learn and inwardly digest this! For upon her rank depends where a woman shall sit at a dinner party, and behind whom—and in front of whom!—she may go through a door, and many other things besides, and deep is her disgrace in the eyes of her colleagues if she displays ignorance or indifference about these matters. I have known women who were most delightful hostesses in their own states, who said they put off entertaining as long as possible in Washington because they feared they might make some mistake in placing their guests at table—and I heard one woman proclaim with pride that she had left three luncheons because she was *not* properly placed! There is a division in the Department of State, however, which gives advice on all these subjects, so the bewildered new arrival can find “Balm in Gilead” by consulting it. The first, and, so far as I know, the only break that I myself made—I have probably made many others when I did *not* realize it!—had its amusing side. The first large dinner to which I went after my arrival was at one of the most beautiful houses in Washington—indeed, in the world—the host being an old college friend of my husband's, who has, since their college days, held many positions of honor. It was a delightful occasion in every way. But formal dinners in Washington, though nominally at eight, are seldom served before nearly nine. And after this dinner, when the men rejoined the women guests, it was already very late. Later and 12 later it grew, and still no one seemed to have the least idea of going home. At last the lady nearest me leaned over,

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and said to me in the kindest possible way, "This is your first dinner since you became a senator's wife, isn't it?"

"Yes," I said, wondering what that had to do with the situation.

"Well, then, perhaps you didn't realize—as is very natural—that you are the ranking guest here, and that none of us can go home until you do?"

I had not known it, of course; and I shall be eternally grateful to that woman for the quiet and cordial way in which she gave me my first lesson in the order of precedence. So many women that I have known have been so much less fortunate in their teachers!

It was an occurrence no less amusing than this that first made me feel that I was not a stranger in a strange land; Washington is actually the first place in which I have ever lived where practically every one has not called me by my first name; and I accepted with joyful alacrity an invitation from an old friend who happened to be passing through the city to come and take tea with her at the Shoreham—the most "exclusive," though by no means the largest, hotel here. As I went through the revolving doors into the foyer, which is small enough to be intimate, and charmingly furnished in French blue, I saw three ladies sitting on a sofa talking together. The one in the middle was deaf, and wore an ear trumpet; and my amazement, as may be imagined, was great as I heard one of her companions shouting into this instrument:

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"I hear that the wife of the new senator from New Hampshire has arrived!"

The deaf lady had not heard it—did not, as a matter of fact, hear it then! It was repeated for her benefit.

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“Oh, she *has*?” said the deaf lady with interest. “Well, that’s very nice, I’m sure. I’m told she’s quite young—and very entertaining—and some one said she had written a book! How does she pronounce her name?”

“She spells it K-E-Y-E-S—” shouted one of her friends patiently.

“Yes, I know how she *spells* it,” said the deaf lady, a trifle peevishly, “but what I want to know is—does she call herself Keeze or Kize?”

I longed to tell her that I pronounced it K-I-Z-E, but I contented myself with sitting down as near them as I decently could to see what would happen next. And, in spite of the proverb that listeners hear no good of themselves, what these three kindly ladies went on to say about me was very cheering indeed to my drooping spirits. When my friend came in and found me, I could hardly tear myself away; and, after my shameful eavesdropping, I faced my new duties with such fresh courage that I have never for one minute repented my outrageous behavior!

Nowhere in the world to-day, I believe, is society more cosmopolitan and more charming than it is here, or, I may add, more cordial. The new Senator’s wife, if she will make the most of her opportunities, if she will meet halfway the kindnesses showered upon her, if she is even reasonably tactful, well-educated and 14 gracious, cannot help finding, in an almost incredibly short time, that her life is very full and interesting and happy. It is exactly because this is so that I think one very real danger confronts a senator’s wife—that she may forget that she has been sent to Washington not primarily to enjoy herself—though of course it is desirable that she should enjoy herself, too, if she can—but to *represent her state*—its past, its present, its future, its best traditions, its greatest hopes, its highest ideals. Almost the first question asked about a man holding public office is naturally enough, “Well, what sort of a man is he?” And the next question, nowadays, seems to follow quite as naturally, “Well, what sort of a wife has he?” The importance of a woman’s place in her husband’s career cannot be overestimated; this has always been

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known; now it is not only known, it is acknowledged. No woman in the country to-day has a greater opportunity than a senator's wife. No woman shares a greater responsibility.

The fullest day that I had last spring—though there were many others nearly as full—was in the early spring when I went first to a noon wedding at St. John's Church, and to the wedding breakfast at the bride's home afterwards; to a reception given at four in the afternoon by Madame Jusserand, the wife of the French Ambassador, to the National Officers and State Regents of the Daughters of the American Revolution; to a reception at Mrs. Meredith's—the wife of the Secretary of Agriculture—at which I myself was “pouring” from half-past five to half-past six; to the farewell dinner given to Mrs. Guernsey, the retiring National President of the Daughters of the American 15 Revolution, at the Hotel Willard at half-past seven; and to a musicale, followed by a midnight supper, at one of the most beautiful houses in the city, which began at half-past ten and lasted until one o'clock in the morning! When I got home, at nearly two, there was no place left in which to go to bed, because I had changed my clothes so many times without having a chance to put things away, that I had covered the bed as well as everything else in my room with cast-off garments, and I had to do some very thorough “picking up” before I could clear a space on which to lay my weary head!

The season really began, for me at least, with the opening of Congress, the ceremony from which I returned to find your letter waiting for me and one of the most interesting, I believe, that has ever been held in the Senate chamber, since, for the first time in its history, a member of its own body, present that day, was President-elect of the United States. At the suggestion of Mr. Lodge, Mr. Harding took his place beside the Vice President, and, vociferously applauded, in spite of the rule that there shall be no applause permitted either on the floor or in the galleries, made a speech so full of good sense, of fair-mindedness, and of dignity, that I am sure no one who heard it could help feeling that not only a new session, and a new season, but a new era were beginning.

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The galleries were packed, of course, and Mrs. Harding was in the place to which she was entitled in the Senate gallery. I think one of the prettiest sights I ever saw was the affection and enthusiasm with which Mrs. Marshall received her when she came in; 16 and later that same day Mrs. Marshall herself telephoned to every one of the senators' wives, to tell us that we would have our first Tuesday luncheon—the weekly meeting of the “Ladies of the Senate” as it has now been officially christened—the next day, and that Mrs. Harding would be our guest of honor. Of course we turned out in full force, and, for the first time, reporters and photographers were admitted to the “Marble Room” where the luncheons are held. It was a gala event, and a spirit of great festivity pervaded it; I believe that these gatherings will be much larger and much gayer than they were last year, and much more closely linked with official life. The way these luncheons began is rather interesting: During the War, the senators' wives, with the Vice President's wife for their president, formed a Red Cross Chapter of their own, and met once a week for a morning's sewing in a room at the Senate office building which was set apart for their use, and remained for luncheon afterwards. When the crucial need for folding bandages and knitting sweaters was past, these informal luncheons had proved so delightful that it was decided to continue them. There are six hostesses each week—the names being taken in alphabetical order—one providing coffee, one salad, one cold meat, one rolls, butter, and jelly, and two dessert. The senate restaurant waiters lay and clear away the table, but we wait upon ourselves, and there is a pleasant camaraderie and intimacy about these gatherings which is quite unlike anything else in Washington “official life.”

And now it is very late, and I am very tired, and I must go through the rest of my mail, and attend to 17 the part that needs immediate answering before I go to bed. I suppose the snow is two feet deep in the valley, and the thermometer down to zero, and the moon shining—everything still and peaceful and white and cold. I heard a phrase in a play this fall which has stuck in my mind ever since. A man said that a certain place was so beautiful that it made him think of kissing a loved woman. That's the way I think always of

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home. Please remember that, Mary dear. And remember that in Washington, just as much as on the farm, I am

Always affectionately yours, Frances.

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Washington, D. C. January 31.

Dear Helen,

Your letter has gone unanswered longer than I meant it should, not because I have been so gay, but because I have been so ill. Now I'm beginning to come to life again, but am still obliged to take things easy. I turned a deaf ear to a beguiling invitation to go out for a long motor ride this afternoon, and here I am, curled up cozily on the sofa to write to you instead.

“As I sit looking out into the snowstorm falling on all these forlorn-looking one-story buildings,” you say, “I can't help feeling that your life in Washington is as remote as life at some foreign court would be. It has been a hard fall, with the trying conditions of falling prices in sheep and cattle and wheat. The country is full of hay, but there is no stock to eat it. I guess we will sail through all right, but it means constant nerve-strain. Do, please, find a lonely moment in which to write me about the gayeties of the Capital and cheer me up.”

Well—first of all—of course you are coming out all right. In the first place, you personally are bound to, as an individual; you have as much “come-back” as a rubber ball! In the second place, you are coming out all right because the whole country is going to do so. Things *are* pretty hard all around. But every war in history has been followed by just such a reaction as 19 we're all going through—worse ones, sometimes. And after the first reaction—the hard one—comes another and bigger one, which is good. “The mills of the gods grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small”—and just now they are busy grinding out better things for Mary in Vermont, and you in Nevada, and me in Washington.

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And now to return to Washington, which is what I have to do promptly the first of October every year now, leaving behind me our lovely Connecticut Valley at its very loveliest, flaming with gold and scarlet. I assure you that a keen feeling of enjoyment over the prospect of the gayeties that I am about to enjoy is not usually the first sensation that I experience when I do it. I am constantly face to face with the fact that an income representing comfort, not to say luxury, in rural New England—and in rural Nevada, too, I suppose!—means nothing better than genteel poverty in Washington. The United States Government, often accused of being extravagant, is the stingiest one in the world when it comes to the payment of its public servants. I honestly believe that one of the main reasons that the personnel of the diplomatic corps is of such a high order is that the foreign countries get the best men they can find to send here, irrespective of whether they have private fortunes or not, and then pay them what they need to maintain the dignity of their positions. Our government, on the contrary, pays its ambassadors and ministers, its vice president, cabinet officers, judges, senators and representatives, army and naval officers, so little, that only men with means of their own can undertake these positions at all, and 20 only those with *large* means can fill them with comfort. In this way, many of the ablest, as well as many of the noblest, men are absolutely debarred from holding public office—exactly the kind of men we most need in office—which seems to me pretty poor economy on the part of Uncle Sam! There are no “perquisites” to the position of being a senator's wife—not even the motor car and the plentiful supply of hothouse flowers which the Cabinet officers' wives do get; and “gayeties” undertaken with the necessity of practicing rigid economy have a little of the “gayness” rubbed off, as many another senator's wife would tell you, if she would confess the truth! Senator Sherman of Illinois, who is to retire from office this spring and therefore cannot possibly be accused of self-seeking, announced last week that before he left the Senate he would introduce a bill to increase the salaries of senators, in order that those who came after him should not have to endure what he had endured. I understand that a Democratic senator in the same position has said the same thing, though his statement has not been made public. I hope they are successful! I've never told you all this before, because I don't like to sound like a



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whiner, and I'm grateful for all the things that do make my life so full and interesting and happy, but I want to prove to you that "nerve strain" isn't confined to Nevada!

I have also discovered, to my distinct discomfort, that the heated discussion of political questions is often considered, apparently, natural and proper for dinner-party conversation. I never heard that subject brought up in that way in my life at home—did you? And I still feel that it never should be. One of the 21 first dinners I went to here was a small one where, besides the host and hostess, there were another Republican senator and his wife, and a Democratic senator and his wife, from the South. The other Republican senator made one or two slurring remarks about the South and quoted its attitude during the Spanish War as an example of what he was trying to illustrate.

"Oh, Senator X," I could not help exclaiming, "surely you're mistaken in what you're saying! The South has been wonderful in every way, and in none more than that one! Think of the part General Y—played in it, for instance!"

The topic of conversation was almost immediately, of course, directed into other channels, but the next day I met the Democratic senator's wife at the dancing class which her small daughter and my small son both attend.

"Please let me thank you for what you said yesterday," she said instantly. "It was very kind. My husband and I both appreciate it very much."

"It was only fair," I replied, and reiterated what I had said about General Y—. I was amazed and horrified, on looking at her, to see that her eyes were full of tears.

"Thank you again," she said. "Of course you didn't guess, having heard only my married name—but he was my father!"

When my first months—which are always pretty hard, for one reason or another, for almost every new senator's wife—were over, I discovered that I had all through them

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unconsciously been making friends, sometimes in quarters where I should have least dared to expect it. Quite early in the course of making my first calls I went to the Serbian Legation. I had already met Madame Grouitch, the charming and brilliant wife of the minister, at Mrs. Lansing's house, and she had been to call on me. Now she came forward—a beautiful woman with her golden hair and lovely complexion, dressed in a soft, green satin gown—and promptly introduced me to a lady who, like myself, had only recently come to Washington—the Baroness Romano Avezana—formerly Jacqueline Taylor of St. Louis—the wife of the new Italian ambassador. She was so simply dressed and so gentle and quiet and friendly, that I am sure all your preconceived ideas of what ambassadors look like would have been upset, as mine were! And I wish you *could* have met her, for no woman that I have ever known has made a more profound impression upon me. I saw her frequently, in all sorts of ways.

Very soon after meeting her at Madame Grouitch's I was asked to a large dinner given in her honor—and that dinner, I am sure, would have come up to all your ideas of what Washington “gayety” should be. There were forty of us at table, which was in the shape of a hollow square, and the center was filled with quantities of pussy-willows, and fragrant daffodils and narcissi, all tied together with exquisite, pale-green, gauzy ribbons. I still remember the broiled lobster that came about the middle of that dinner, and the ice cream on sponge cake, smothered over with hot meringue, that came at the end of it! The ambassador sat, of course, on our hostess' right. I sat next him, with Marquis de Bernezzo on my other side, and I assure you that I did not pass a dull moment! We went from the dinner to a concert diplomatique, and, discovering that my husband was out of town, the Romanos asked me to go with them in their motor and took me home afterward—with exactly the same friendly informality that some one would “see that I got back all right” after a dance at home.

Soon after this I was asked to come to the embassy for tea—not to one of the big receptions, though of course I went to those too, later on, but for a quiet hour on a day when the baroness was “not receiving”—only about half-a-dozen others being present.

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An invitation like this is really an appointment, and it is a terrible breach of good form for a senator's wife to refuse to go if she receives such an invitation from the wife of the President, Vice President, or one of the ambassadors. Not that she would wish to refuse, naturally, but it sometimes takes a good deal of adjusting, in an already full day, to accept! This was my first experience with an engagement of this sort, and I confess that I was happily disappointed in it. A little tea table, presided over by the pretty daughter of the house, was set quite informally in the library, with a steaming kettle, and wonderful little tarts, and a great, rich, Italian chocolate cake, and we gathered around it and chatted in the merriest way imaginable, without the slightest trace of stiffness anywhere.

The Italian government is, I believe, the only one which recognizes so clearly the importance of the position of an ambassador's wife that it pays her a salary of her own, quite separate from the one it gives her husband. And as my acquaintance with this ambassador's wife grew into a real friendship, I felt it would be absolutely impossible to overestimate *her* importance, at all events.

"I never knew a woman who did her job better!" a young man occupying an important position in the Department of State exclaimed to me not long ago, and I agreed with him.

She never, apparently, forgot a name or a face, and—what is worth infinitely more—she never forgot to greet the owner of the name and face with courtesy and kindness. By her intelligence, her tact, her sweetness, she endeared herself to all sorts and conditions of people, and when word was received here this fall that her husband had been transferred to another post, the regret was so widespread that it seemed to be actually universal. A great many farewell festivities were given in her honor, but they were all tinged with a feeling of sadness. Two days before she left she sent for me to come to see her for the last time, and gave me a lovely signed photograph of herself which is standing beside me on the bookcase as I write. And among other things of which we talked during the hour that we had together was the question of independent citizenship for American women who marry foreigners—about which there has been so much commotion this last year—a

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commotion, it seems to me, entirely out of proportion to its importance, when you consider the really big things that have been allowed to fall by the wayside.

“What good would it do me if the United States declared that I might have independent citizenship? Italy wouldn't!” she said, bringing out a point that had

*Ira Hill, New York Baroness Romano Avezana, the Wife of the Former Italian Ambassador*

25 not occurred to me before, and which is worth thinking over “I'm an Italian now. My husband's country is mine.”

And, honestly, Helen, the way she said it made me think of Ruth's “Thy country shall be my country, and thy people my people,” Bible. I went down the steps of the embassy with my eyes full of tears.

But I mustn't be too grave when you want me to be gay! And there is woman in the diplomatic corps of whom I wan? tell you something before I say good-by—Mada? Grouitch, whom I mentioned before. She is an American, too, and, by the way, it isn't strictly correct to speak of her husband as the Serbian minister—he is the minister of the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, a much larger territory than the original Serbia before the War. Madame Grouitch was in Serbia throughout the War, and she will go down in history as one of the great women of the War, if half she has done is ever known. She is not only very lovely to look at, but very talented—the most eloquent public speaker I have ever heard—I don't want to qualify that statement in the least! She gives wonderful talks about Serbia—not only about its sufferings, but about its history, its government, and particularly the splendid part that Serbian women have played in the past and seem likely to play in the future. I have heard her speak over and over again—you may be sure I go whenever there is a chance!—and I have never yet heard her repeat herself. Every time she has something new and thrilling and touching to tell, something of her own wonderful self to give her hearers. Last summer she visited me at the farm 26 for

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a week, and I never shall forget that week as long as I live. I love to see her at the head of a beautiful dinner table banked with flowers—dressed in vivid colors, a hand of jewels in her hair; it is a sight not easily forgotten. But I love better still to see her when her face is lighted up as she talks of the work to which she has dedicated herself, and she reveals in her own person the symbol of her dedication.

Both these women have urged me to go to their countries and see for myself what is going on in them. I hope to be able to arrange to do it some day—perhaps before so very long. If I do, I shall see real Court life then—as well as life in humbler circles, too—and I promise that I will write you all about it?

“And don't you,” says Helen to herself about this time perhaps, “ever give any parties yourself? Do you spend all your time going around to embassies and legations?”

Well, I don't give as many as I used to in the good old days at Pine Grove Farm, when about all that was necessary for me to do to make my guests have a good time was to pull up the front-hall rugs, and serve lemonade and cookies, and set the phonograph going! But this season I am giving a series of small luncheons. Did you ever read that recipe for angel cake that appeared in *Life* once—“First catch your angel?” Well, in Washington, when you wish to give a party, you first catch your angel!—that is, you invite some person of distinction to be your guest of honor, and then build up your party around his or her acceptance. The first one I had was for the Baroness Romano, with Madame Grouitch, Mrs. Meredith— 27 wife of the Secretary of Agriculture—and Mrs. Woodbury, wife of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, among the other guests. The second one was in honor of Madame Bahkmeteff, wife of the Russian ambassador; and the third one, this last week, was in honor of Mrs. Marshall, the Vice President's wife, with Madame Peter, the lovely wife of the new Swiss minister, as the other bright particular star. I shall have others as the winter goes on, but I hate to think—good Republican though I am—that women I have grown so fond of, like Mrs. Marshall and Mrs. Meredith and Mrs. Woodbury, won't be here to go to them. This is my first experience, you see, with a change of administration,

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and I suppose it invariably must bring such regrets with it, even when one's own side is victorious.

Mrs. Meredith will be missed enough for herself, heaven knows, but every one who has been to her parties is going to miss those, too, for they are always so “beautifully appointed” as the society columns say, that I hardly dare mention them in the same paragraph with the simple little ones I give myself. The ball she gave a few weeks ago was one of the most brilliant of the season, and I had a wonderful time at it, but I have enjoyed her small entertainments even more, I think. She has the most exquisite embroidered and lace-trimmed linen, the most beautiful flowers, and the most delicious food that you can imagine.

But no one is going to be missed so much as Mrs. Marshall! As you probably know, the President's wife is normally the official leader of Washington society, and the Vice President's wife, though she is bound to have a busy existence, of course, has no great weight of responsibility resting upon her shoulders. But for years Mrs. Marshall has had to carry not only her own job, but Mrs. Wilson's, for the White House has been closed on account of the President's illness. There will be different conditions after the fourth of March, and Mrs. Harding, of whom I shall write you more some other time—for I know her very pleasantly, though not intimately—will keep “open house” again, if I am not much mistaken. Meanwhile, Mrs. Marshall, with never-failing sweetness and tact and energy, has endeared herself to every senator's and congressman's wife who has known her even in the most casual way.

One reason that I am feeling sleepy rather than snappy to-day is because I was up most of the night “assisting” at the final reception given to Mr. and Mrs. Marshall last night at the Congressional Club. This annual reception is one of the big events of the year here, not only in point of size but in point of importance. The Congressional Club is the club to which every congressman's and senator's wife is entitled to belong as soon as she reaches Washington, and is housed in a beautiful little building made especially for it. I never saw

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it look so attractive as it did last night. The curving, broad staircase separates into two branches halfway up, and was banked with ferns and palms. The great oval room at the top, where the reception was held, was hung from end to end with southern smilax, and above the smilax, as soft and feathery as maidenhair, floated the flag of every state in the Union, recently placed there, at a most interesting 29 ceremony, by women—members of the club—from every state in the Union. The large white mantel was banked with pink flowers, and in the dining room, where a delicious two-course supper was served about eleven o'clock, a great basket—enormous is not too strong a word to use—of the most gorgeous American Beauty roses that I have ever beheld towered on the center of the table between two candelabra whose shades, under filigree silver, matched the flowers. The Marine Band—the best band, I believe, in the whole world—played, and the lovely dresses of the women moving to and fro in the brilliant, decorated room completed a very wonderful picture. Mrs. Marshall was in black velvet, and Mrs. Ward, the president of the club, who received with her, in an exquisite dress of gray and silver—but of course there was every color of the rainbow there—especially a great many vivid greens and reds, and quantities of silver brocade. About a dozen senators' and representatives' wives “floated” with instructions to make ourselves especially agreeable to any one who was not having a good time—but our task was an easy one, for every *one* was having a good time, and, before the reception was half over, dancing had begun.

Then, of course, we have other gayeties here besides dinners and luncheons and receptions. Washington is wonderful concert city, and now it is, also, trying hard to establish civic opera, such as most of the cities of any consequence in Europe have, but which, more's the pity, is practically unknown in this country. The Washington Opera Company gave a performance of “Aïda” not long ago which was a gala event, and though I have 30 seen it given over and over again, I have never seen it better done. The two main parts were taken by “visiting artists,” but all the others were done by “local talent” and, though you are such a distinguished amateur actress yourself, I don't believe you can conceive of a semiamateur undertaking so beautifully carried out. Scenery, costumes,

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chorus, solos—everything was splendid, and I'm proud to say that the stage-manager was a *woman!* The audience was almost as interesting as the performance, for literally “everybody” was there, beautifully dressed and enthusiastic, and, after it was over, one of its principal promoters gave a midnight supper, with dancing, at his house. I sank into bed at three o'clock in the morning. “Feeling very much the worse for wear?” Not a bit of it! Feeling that I had seen the triumph of a splendid idea made into a splendid actuality, and mighty glad of it!

I hope, my dear, that I've been able to cheer and interest you by some of the things I've written, and I hope, too, that I've been able to make you see what I've learned since I came here—that though “society” does make a few women vapid and foolish, like some I've happened to meet, that is partly because they would probably have been vapid and foolish anyway. Oftener, much oftener, it teaches them all sorts of valuable lessons, giving them poise and ease of expression and that intangible thing called “charm”; makes them tactful and courteous and well-informed and intelligent and sympathetic. Without the highest type of “society woman” to help us, it would be hard to pass through a period like the present one, which means “nerve strain” for us all, for the life that they 31 are living is so inseparably linked with the big things of to-day, both nationally and internationally, that the tie could not be severed without disastrous results. I hope I've made you see how kind and cordial and hospitable such women have been to me here, how much I have to be thankful for, and how much I've learned. And with much love, believe me to be,

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. February 25.

Dear Jane,

It was great fun to escape to New York for a few days, and to have such a splendid visit with you. Oh! the joy of not making a single call for three whole days! Since I got back,



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my time has been so crowded that my bread-and-butter letter is very tardy—I'm afraid it doesn't represent anything much better than a dry crust! I'm sorry, but I haven't been able to help it. But now, that the "Spring Breakfast" is over, I have at least a little breathing space, and I am going to seize it and sit right down and write you all about it.

This "Spring Breakfast," which always takes place the day before Ash Wednesday, is one of the great events on the calendar of the Congressional Club, and this year it was given in honor of Mrs. Wilson. The big ballroom at Rauscher's restaurant was completely filled with little tables, with eight women at each table—three hundred and fifty in all—with a long "honor table," on a raised platform at one side of the room, where Mrs. Wilson sat at the right, and Mrs. Marshall at the left, of Mrs. Ward, the president of the club, and where there were about thirty other women—past presidents, members of the executive board, and 33 so on. The luncheon itself was delicious—cream of mushroom soup, lobster croquettes, chicken *chaudfroid* with chiffonade salad, and caramel-nut ice cream with spun sugar—and the tables were beautifully decorated. After lunch came a "Shakespearean program." Our menus were most attractively printed, with pictures of the Old Globe Theater in London on the covers; there was music of the Elizabethan period, including some of Shakespeare's songs; and a clever little satirical play was given, called, "The Ladies Speak at Last," in which Juliet, Portia, Ophelia and Lady Macbeth, all comfortably married for some time, and with the glamour of romance a little rubbed off their love-affairs, discuss their husbands, and "that wild lad, Will Shakespeare, who writes quaint stories and slanders us all!" I was asked to give the one toast of the occasion, and composed some verses, which I recited standing between Mrs. Wilson and Mrs. Marshall, Mrs. Ward changing places with me while I did so. The toast was, "If Shakespeare came to Washington," and the verses happened to "hit just the right spot," and were so enthusiastically received, that I was absolutely thunderstruck. Mrs. Marshall walked off with the original copy, and nearly every woman present asked me for one, too, so that it occurs to me that perhaps you may enjoy them also. Here they are:

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### If Shakespeare Came to Washington

If Shakespeare came to Washington I fear he wouldn't have much fun. To poverty he'd be reduced Before he got his plays produced. 34 The managers would say to him, "Why don't you show a little vim? If you expect to make a hit You'll have to jazz this up a bit!" And he would pound and pound away And try to write a jazzy play Upon some trusty Underwood — But the results would do no good. His manuscripts would be returned, Express collect, politely spurned. The maid would leave, and he would write In the dark watches of the night Because the daytime would pass by In making beds and apple pie, And hearing Mrs. S. lament That all their savings had been spent. Meanwhile the bills would fast accrue And he would find the rent was due. He wouldn't think this was much fun— If Shakespeare came to Washington.

If Shakespeare came to Washington I fear he wouldn't have much fun. Although in England of some note, Here, "Why, I didn't know you *wrote!*" Would greet him when he made his calls And went to dinners and to balls. Or else, "You must be bright, indeed, But then, you know, *I never read!*" And furthermore, he would be told, "I don't see how that play got sold! Your ignorance of etiquette Appalls me when I think of it. Why, I could tell you lots of things About the early English Kings, And I can hardly hold my peace, When I read what you write of Greece; 35 And Italy, beyond a doubt, You do not know one thing about." And, thinking mournfully of that, Bill would seek out his humble flat, And wish that he were back again Where he was much beloved of men, And where Queen Bess and all her court His most distinguished presence sought. And he would shed a bitter tear Because he ever had come here.

But walking sadly up and down Within the confines of this town, Suppose he chanced to drop in *here*, And find this scene of goodly cheer. With ladies fair on every hand And the first lady of the land, So full of sweetness and of grace That she adorns that highest place. And then the second lady, too, To whom our warmest love is due For all the kindness and the tact That have made great her smallest act. And then besides, for all the rest, The

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ones which every state thought best To send to represent their home From ocean foam to ocean foam, Because they were, in every way, The finest women of the day, Worthy of honor, faith and trust— If he came here, I'm sure he must At once feel glad that he had come To make the capital his home, Forget his cares, drive gloom away, And plan for ever more to stay, And join with us in all our fun— If Shakespeare came to Washington!

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And now I think I won't write to you any more about gayeties this time, but about what seem to me the two greatest *public* events of February—the unveiling of the statues of the three great pioneer suffragists in the rotunda of the Capitol on the fifteenth, and the centennial celebration of George Washington University this last week.

More than two months ago, a member of the National Woman's Party telephoned me, and asked if I would serve on the “presentation committee” when Adelaide Johnston's statue of Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott, and Elizabeth Stanton Cady were presented to the Capitol. And when the time came, I went with Madame Grouitch, the wife of the Serbian minister, and with two other senators' wives to the Capitol. It was a wonderful night, still and clear and frosty, with starlight and moonlight as brilliant as I have seldom seen them outside of the Connecticut Valley; and in the great open square space in front of the Capitol were standing literally hundreds of men and women who had not been able to gain admittance—standing quietly and patiently, hoping to be able to at least the through the building after the exercises were over. There was not the slightest sign of impatience or rebellion or disorder. And the spirit as well as the size of this vast throng was the most wonderful tribute to the triumph of the cause that was being celebrated that I can possibly imagine. It moved me indescribably. Never, except in a great church, have I felt as I did standing there silently in the starlight, one atom in an immense mass, looking up at the huge white marble building towering before me.

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And then—much as I hate to tell you so—my feeling of exaltation passed, and was supplanted by one of helpless rage. I presented myself, with my three companions, at the “white ticket entrance”—and we were refused admittance! The rotunda was thronged already by persons who, through bad management somewhere, had succeeded in getting in and filling it to overflowing, even the seats specially reserved for “distinguished guests.” But at last an officer, after putting his head in the window, recognizing us, and calling us all by name, hesitated over “Mrs. Keyes of New Hampshire.”

“You write, don't you?” he said suspiciously, as if fearing what I might have to say in print if I didn't get in. “You come along with me.”

Basely deserting my three companions—whose generosity in allowing me to go without them was perhaps stimulated by the lurid assurances of another officer who graphically assured us that if we did get in we would be crushed to death!—I followed him, forced my way after him through a crowd at a side door, slipped inside, was passed along from one guard to another, hurried through long, dim, silent marble corridors, and, finally, exhausted but triumphant, entered the rotunda!

Of course there was no question of a “reserved seat in section A,” even though I still held the ticket for it in my hand. Of course I had to stand, on feet already aching after a hard day, throughout the entire ceremony—and I think I occupied the last available inches of room at that! Of course I shouldn't have got in at all, when women like Madame Grouitch were 38 shut out. But, Jane, in spite of everything, it was worth it! Not if I had had to go through something twice as hard would I have missed it. The rotunda was illuminated only indirectly, by two rows of lights concealed under marble cornices high in the dome, giving a wonderfully soft, dim radiance to the great room, and to the famous paintings hanging on its walls. Beside Vinnie Ream's statue of Lincoln—position so impressive and symbolical that it brought tears to my eyes: the likeness of the great emancipator, with his hands outstretched, wrought by a woman in the days when women who produced works of art, like women who plead for their political rights, were far from being free to achieve them

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or respected for trying to—stood the huge block of marble, still covered with an orange-colored cloth. At one side of the room was a stringed orchestra, at another, near the veiled statue, a choir of women; and all around it, carrying banners of blue and scarlet and purple and gold, were the representatives of one great woman's organization after another—so many that they crowded each other, even in that vast space, and the floating flags touched, waving over their heads.

Jane Addams, who presided and made the speech of presentation, was still speaking when I entered. Then Mr. Gillett, in the name of both houses of Congress, accepted the statue. The orchestra began to play; every light was turned off. Then one powerful searchlight from the back of the room was turned full upon the statue, leaving everything else still in darkness. Two women, dressed in flowing orange-colored robes, stepped slowly to either side of it, 39 and lifted the orange cloth. The statue, a block of glistening white in the black chamber, was revealed.

The statue has been much criticized, and I was fully prepared not to be favorably impressed with it. But I am free to say that I feel that the criticism heaped upon the work is neither just nor intelligent. I can think of no way in which the heads of three women, combined in one statue, could be treated with more dignity and effectiveness than rising from the massive block which forms their base. And Jane, isn't that symbolical, too? No one seems to have thought of it—but didn't those three women have to fight through, and rise above, something as hard as marble in their lifetime? It seemed so to me, as I stood there, a queer lump in my throat, watching the great procession begin, listening to the military music to which it marched, as the representatives of the women's organizations, carrying their banners before them, started forward, and, one after another, first lifted an immense wreath of laurel or flowers high in the air, and then laid it in tribute before the statue, until the marble block was completely covered, and only the three, noble marble faces showed above the fragrant mass piled high around them.

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And now for the centennial—do you remember what fun we had last year, when you were in Washington, going together to the Midwinter Convocation of George Washington University, and seeing Ibañez, and Hoover, and a dozen or so other prominent men get honorary degrees? But no woman did—indeed the University has never conferred a degree upon but one woman—Mrs. Larz Anderson—until this winter, 40 when it gave degrees to four. And I have wished, over and over again this last week, that you were here to go with me again this year— *for I was one of the four!* I am entitled to sign this letter  
Frances Parkinson Keyes, Doctor of Letters!

Having flung my great piece of news at you like that, whole, so to speak, I must pick it apart and tell you some of the details. The Midwinter Convocation is always a great event here, as you know, but this year it was a Centennial Celebration as well, and consequently doubly great. One hundred and thirty representatives and delegates from colleges and universities from all over this country, and from other countries as well, came to help celebrate it. The ceremonies began with a simple but lovely service at the Church of the Covenant Sunday afternoon; and continued, the next evening, with a dinner at Rauscher's. There were four hundred guests, seated at small tables, at the dinner, completely filling both the large and small ballrooms, which fortunately connect, and which were beautifully decorated with American flags, pictures of George Washington, the University coat of arms, and quantities of flowers. The long “honor table” stood at one side of the room, on a slightly raised platform and at that there were twenty-three men and only four women—the four who were to receive honorary degrees the next day: Julia Marlowe, whom we call Mrs. Sothern here, of course, and whom I know I don't need to introduce or describe to you; Mabel Boardman, of Red Cross fame, now one of the city commissioners of the District of Columbia—the only woman who has ever held that office in the city of 41 Washington; Permeal Jane French, Dean of Women at the University of Idaho, and one of the great administrative teachers of the day; and myself. Miss French was in black; but Mrs. Sothern was in cloth of gold, Miss Boardman in blue and gold brocade; and I in white and gold brocade, and we all had jeweled bands in our hair; this similarity of

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dress was entirely an accident, but I am told it was a most effective accident viewed from the main part of the room. The men at the “honor table,” all of whom were to receive the honorary degree of Doctor of Law the next day, made a distinguished group. As it was obviously impossible to ask the representatives from each and every college to speak, Dr. Collier, the President of George Washington University, wisely chose one to speak for the New England colleges, one for the southern colleges, and so on, and one for each of the foreign universities. Monsieur Jusserand was there not only as the French Ambassador, but as the duly accredited representative of the University of Paris; Signor Ricci, the newly arrived Italian Ambassador, as the representative of the University of Bologna; Monsieur Mathieu, the Chilean Ambassador, as the representative of the University of Chile—which is, it seems, *fifty years older than Harvard*—and still we are apt to feel, in the United States, that the civilization of South America *is recent!* The after-dinner speeches were the most brilliant and witty that I have ever heard, and I hope you won't think I'm prejudiced when I tell you that the gem of the evening was delivered by Senator Moses of New Hampshire, who spoke for the New England colleges. “The very 42 flower of perfection in an after-dinner speech,” I heard one woman characterize it, and I agreed with her. Mrs. Sothern was the only woman speaker, and you could have heard a pin drop in that immense room when she arose and in her wonderful voice and with her wonderful charm recited four of Shakespeare's sonnets. I waited breathlessly, fearing that she would not give the one which I love best of all; but she saved it until the last, and I found out afterwards it was because it is her favorite, too—

Let me not to the marriage of true minds Admit impediments—

I sat between His Excellency, the Chilean Ambassador, and Senator Pittman, both of whom I knew before; and since both are brilliant and delightful men, the dinner had an added pleasure for me because I was so agreeably placed. Senator Pittman very kindly offered to take me with him and Mrs. Pittman when they went next day to the Central High School, where the Convocation exercises took place. Of course we had to go early, and Harry, who was frantically trying to find a “pair”—a senator on the opposite side

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who would withhold his vote during Harry's absence, and thus even things up—and did not succeed until a very late hour, only got to the exercises by the skin of his teeth. We parted from Mrs. Pittman at the entrance, and hurried to the basement, where, in a large room, members of the faculty, members of the senior class, and candidates for honorary degrees, were all rushing about, trying to struggle into their robes before taking their places in the academic 43 procession. As there were no mirrors, Mrs. Sothern and I saw that each other's caps were on straight, and each other's gowns tied, before we got into line together. I suppose you lost your heart to Julia Marlowe's Juliet or Beatrice or Katherine long ago, as I did. But if you had been in the basement of the Central High School that day, you would have lost it far more hopelessly to Mrs. Sothern! She had on the simplest sort of a little black taffeta dress, and little round-toed, low-heeled shoes, and there was not a particle of paint or powder on her fresh lovely face. She told me she hoped we would see more of each other next winter—she is just starting for England now—and it was all I could do to keep from saying, “You don't hope so half as much as I do!”

At last the music began, and we filed along, a procession that completely filled the big stage when we reached it. The building was packed, and as I looked out over the sea of faces, it made my heart thump harder than ever—and it was thumping pretty hard anyway!—to see how many of my own friends were there. I had just one little tiny regret—there always has to be that, doesn't there, even in the brightest day? You see there was not one single person there from home, no one whom I'd known before I was a senator's wife or a writer—and I wished there might have been!

The exercises were long, but they were very interesting. Last of all the honorary degrees were conferred by Dr. Collier—upon the three ambassadors whom I have mentioned before; upon Senator Pittman and Senator Moses; upon a great preacher, a great journalist, 44 and a great cartoonist, and many other distinguished men—twenty-three in all; and, as you already know, upon Mrs. Sothern, Miss Boardman, Miss French and myself. Each candidate for the honor stepped to the center of the stage in front and stood facing Dr. Collier while the latter read the qualifications entitling him (or her!) to receive



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the degree; shook hands with Dr. Collier, and was given the parchment diploma; and then bent over while the so-called “hood,” the insignia of honor, was flung over his (or her!) head, and draped carefully over the back of the robe by a member of the faculty standing near by.

The little speeches with which Dr. Collier presented the diplomas were remarkably felicitous and gracious, and in order to give you some idea of what they were like, I'll quote mine, which he was good enough to give to me afterwards—in order, also, to answer the unflattering question which with the horrible frankness of an old friend you have probably been asking yourself for some minutes: “But what on earth should they give you one for?” (*Haven't you?*)

“Doctor of Letters, Frances Parkinson Keyes: Vice President of the League of American Penwomen; frequent contributor to many reviews and periodicals of the highest literary standards; author of novels that are filled with the breath of that pure wholesome rural life which is the strength of America and its institutions.”

That's a good deal to live up to, isn't it? But I'll try, very, very hard!

45

And that, I think, is the end of the story, for after singing the “Star Spangled Banner” we all marched out again, “amidst tumultuous applause,” to quote the newspaper writers who described the event for the daily press, where, the next day, we read all about ourselves, and gazed upon our pictures.

It must be the end of the letter as well, I think, for I am very tired. I seem to close every letter that I write to you girls by saying that—and I certainly am. I ate just two meals, besides breakfasts, at home last week, and at one of those I had company myself; and yesterday, which was my receiving day, I had more than three hundred callers, and stood on my feet for near four hours on end, which, coming on top of everything else I had done,

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was “some stunt,” as my eldest son would say! So I think I have a right to be tired, don't you? But this time I'm going to add something to that statement.

*I'm very, very happy!*

Good night, Janey dear. Much love—you know how much, I think!

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes, *Doctor of Letters!*

Washington, D. C. March 12.

Dear Elizabeth,

There have been so many times in our lives when I have been ill, and you have been my most faithful and constant visitor, that it is hard for me to realize how completely things are reversed now—that I am well and strong at last, and leading the most active kind of a life, while you are lying quietly out on a sunny veranda in California, idle for the first time in years, because you are not able to be busy. I wish that I could run in upon you with flowers and magazines and jelly, and gossip about our little world, as you used to do for me! But since I can't, a letter must start instead, that shall tell you, as well as it can, about the great events of this last month.

On the Tuesday before Inauguration Week came the farewell luncheon of the “Ladies of the Senate” for Mrs. Marshall—her last time with us as presiding officer, for the new Vice President's wife automatically becomes the president of our organization. Mrs. Marshall has been very greatly beloved, and it was decided, shortly before this, that we could not let her go away without taking with her “something to remember us by.” So a beautiful silver service, with a huge tray and four tall candlesticks to go with it, were bought with the contributions which we were all only 47 too glad to make, and this was placed on a small table covered with an American flag, and brought in by two waiters as we were finishing lunch, and put beside Mrs. Marshall. Then Mrs. Spencer, in the name of all of us, made a

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little speech of presentation as the flag was lifted—a beautiful little speech perfectly voicing what I am sure every one of us was feeling. Mrs. Marshall rose to reply, and with her eyes fixed on the silver began bravely, “I don't think I can say exactly what I want to. Of course this gift is very valuable, very beautiful, but the feeling that went with it means so much more to me that—” she came to a dead stop, the tears rolling down her cheeks, and one could have heard a pin drop in that great room. Conscious that I was crying hard, and feeling rather ashamed, I turned first to Mrs. Pittman, sitting on my right, and then to Mrs. Sheppard, sitting on my left, and immediately felt greatly consoled—they were both crying even harder than I was!

The early part of Inauguration Week was very full for me, for I was, as usual, going out a great deal, and I had a luncheon in honor of Lady Geddes, the wife of the British Ambassador, on Tuesday, and began my preparations to do all I could to make the visit of the New Hampshire delegation to the Inauguration—the governor and his wife, with the members of his staff and council and their wives—as pleasant as possible. But the Inauguration celebration really commenced, for me, when I received a little card from Mrs. Marshall saying that she was asking the wives of all the senators to come to tea with her and Mrs. Coolidge, who was, after Friday, to be the President 48 of the “Ladies of the Senate.” And when I reached Mrs. Marshall's apartment, at the Willard, our largest and most important hotel here, I found the rooms already thronged with my—is it all right, I wonder, to say “my colleagues”?—and the table set with the beautiful silver service which we had given to her the week before; while on a table near it stood the immense silver loving cup which the members of the Senate had given to the Vice President, filled with roses. It is difficult to describe the spirit which seemed to pervade the rooms—we are all glad to welcome Mrs. Coolidge, who is just as nice as she can be, with the friendliest and most cordial sort of a manner, and an absolutely uncannily accurate memory for names and faces—and yet—there was no getting away from the fact that this was Mrs. Marshall's last “At Home,” that we were going to lose her. As I turned to go out, I met the Vice President coming in, and tried to tell him how I felt.

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“Well, she thinks the world of all of you,” he said, looking over towards his wife, “and—and the United

*Copyright by Underwood, Washington, D. C., Photo Service The First Two Presidents of the Ladies of the Senate “ Mrs. Marshall has endeared herself to every senator's wife who has known her. ” “ Mrs. Coolidge is just as nice as can be, with the friendliest sort of a manner. ”*

49 States Senate is a pretty good place. But it's better to leave this way than to have every one glad that we're going!”

Thursday was, as usual, my own “receiving day”—my last official one this season—and as Governor and Mrs. Brown were to receive with me, and the entire delegation were to be my guests, I was naturally anxious to have everything as attractive as possible, and spent a busy morning. Afternoon tea, in Washington, for a senator's wife on her day at home, means a good deal more than merely tea. It means coffee and chocolate and sherbet; it means sandwiches and biscuits and cakes and candy and salted nuts; and, on a special occasion like this one, it means salads as well during the latter part of the afternoon, flower-decked rooms, friends to “pour” and “float” her best bib and tucker for the hostess. And, most of all, it means literally hundreds of callers! I have referred more than once in my letters to the burdensome routine of making calls, but, out of the fullness of recent experiences, I can't help saying something about the equally burdensome routine of receiving them. Any one who takes it into her—or his—head to do so may call upon a senators' wife—and does! So besides her own friends, who wish to call upon her, and the various persons who, for official reasons, must call upon her, there are dozens who come out of curiosity, or because they have nothing better to do—or for no reason at all. Girls' schools, located in Washington, advertise in their catalogues that pupils will be taken to see “official” women, as part of their education, and I have had as many as sixty girls here in the course of one afternoon, 50 their youthful footsteps carefully guided by a teacher in charge, who come and shake my hand and murmur that they are pleased to meet me,

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and then wander into my dining room and devour everything in sight. I have also had callers investigate the engagement pad on my desk, help themselves to a few flowers, or telephone beforehand to say that the receiving hours which had been announced—from four to seven—were not convenient for them, and that they would like to come at half-past three!

We did not, fortunately, have to assist in the education—or in the nourishment—of many young ladies last Thursday, but my new friends here nearly all came in to join with me in welcoming my old friends from home, so the house was crowded for several hours; and, when the party was over, I kicked my slippers off my aching feet and tumbled into bed, thankful that the night session, which is the invariable rule of the last night of Congress, was keeping Harry at the Capitol, and that we had been forced to decline a very attractive dinner invitation in consequence.

The early part of the week had been very warm, bringing out the first buds on all the trees, and the crocuses and narcissi in the gardens; but the fourth of March came in with a brisk breeze blowing, and a crisp, sparkling freshness in the air which is very unusual here in the spring. As I stepped out of the house, Sixteenth Street, looking north, was a beautiful sight. Our next-door neighbor here is the French Ambassador, and just beyond him live the Spanish Ambassador, and the Swiss, Cuban, and Polish ministers. And from each of these magnificent white marble 51 buildings, shining in the sun, hung great flags of their respective countries, flying stiff in the wind, almost as if they had been fastened to the prow of a boat. Mrs. Woodbury, the wife of the retiring Assistant Secretary of the Navy, was waiting for me at the front door in one of the big gray motor cars marked, "Navy Department." Early as it was—not much past ten—the streets were beginning to be crowded, with the most good-natured, orderly, happy crowds that it has ever been my good fortune to see. And, as we swung down by the Treasury building, we had the luck to arrive at the exact moment when the cavalry from Fort Myer, escorting the delegation going to the White House to meet the President, passed that corner. Then we sped along

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down Pennsylvania Avenue, and thanks to the official "Permit" on our motor, passed the guards at the Capitol, and took the private elevator to the Senate gallery.

The balconies to the dingy old chamber were filling fast: Mrs. Harding came in, beautifully dressed, as always, dignified and composed; Mrs. Coolidge, with her two lovely boys; Mrs. Marshall, wearing an enormous bouquet of orchids; Mrs. Gillett, in a long sable coat; one senator's wife after another—dear little Mrs. Sheppard with her rosy cheeks, Mrs. Gay with her beautiful golden hair, Mrs. Lenroot (the newly elected President of the Congressional Club) with her sweet smile and kind eyes, Mrs. Sutherland, just back from a trip to Florida, bubbling over with good spirits—the place was thronged with handsome, interesting women. And, down below, Mr. Marshall was presiding for the last time, while a few final appointments 52 were being confirmed, and—according to a time-honored custom—senators who are to remain were delivering eulogies upon senators who were about to depart, and the men thus complimented were replying to the speeches made in their honor. Three times the clock was set back, for the fiction that the new Congress begins at twelve is always strictly maintained. Then the senators and senators elect and Cabinet-designate and visiting governors began to take their places on the east side of the chamber, crowded to the very entrances, of course, with extra chairs, placed as closely together as possible; and the members of the House of Representatives took their places on the west side, with the retiring Cabinet, the members of the diplomatic corps, gorgeous in uniforms trimmed with gold lace (the only exception was the plain pale-blue uniform worn by Dr. Grouitch, the Serbian Minister) and decorated with medals. Next—on the east side again—came the members of the Supreme Court, wearing their robes, and the ranking military and naval officers. The Speaker of the House and the Vice President elect were escorted to seats beside the Vice President; and finally, with Mr. Knox, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Cannon ("Uncle Joe"), Mr. Overman, Mr. Revis and Mr. Stedman, the President elect entered the chamber, and took his place just in front of the raised platform where the Vice President sits.

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Over and over again the applause rang out—for the diplomatic corps, for General Pershing, for Coolidge and Marshall, and, of course, most of all, for Harding. Then a hush—can a hush be mighty?—it seemed to 53 me as mighty as the applause—fell as Marshall turned and administered the oath of office to Coolidge:

“Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, and without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the office upon which you are about to enter: so help you God?”

After this oath had been administered, Mr. Marshall gave his farewell address. He has a fine voice, and a wonderful command of the English language; but he is neither a large nor a handsome man; in spite of that, however, he loomed before me with a greatness and a glory that I have seldom seen in any human being's face.

“Very shortly,” he began, “I shall have ended my official life as the constitutional presiding officer of this body. That moment, when it arrives, will not mark my demotion into the ranks of the average American citizen, *for I never rose above it*. . . .

“I may have failed, but I have tried to keep the faith. . . . A government dedicated to the inalienable rights of man to life, to liberty, and to the pursuit of happiness can find its perfect accomplishment only in representatives brave and strong enough to rise above the ambitions, passions, and prejudices of individuals and groups. . . .

“For eight long years crowded with events which 54 have forever changed the currents of the world's history, I have been with you. You have been good to me. Not one of you can wish for himself a kindlier fate than I would give you if I were omnipotent. . . .

“I go, but you remain. I leave with you the same inarticulate cry in my soul with which I came to you—My country! . . . Let him who goes and him who stays alike remember that

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he who saves his life at the risk of his country's honor loses it, and he who loses his life for the sake of his country's honor saves it.”

Can these mere fragments, taken almost at random, show you why, instead of writing, “I nearly cried, Elizabeth,” as I so often have before, I must write instead, “I cried”? And, as I looked up, I saw that every one around me was crying, too. We heard the chaplain's prayer as if it were a long way off, we saw the new Vice President take his place through a mist. . . .

I am not ashamed. I am glad. I am a Republican woman, for years my traditions, my environment, my personal political ambitions have been associated with Republicans. As such I am proud to say that no statesman of my own party has moved me as Marshall did that day.

“Farewell and hail!” Do not think, from what I have just written, that Mr. Coolidge did not make a fine speech, too, that I did not thrill with pride as I heard him. To use a phrase of his own making, it made me “have faith in Massachusetts,” to hear him. For what he said was brief and clear and scholarly; it was filled with the expression of fine ideals, and gave promise of fine acts. I liked especially his statement 55 that the greatest duty of the Senate is “the preservation of liberty—not only the rights of the majority, they need little protection, but the rights of the minority, from whatever side they may be assailed.”

Finally was read the President's message calling the Senate to special executive session; the new senators were sworn in, taking the same oath of office as the Vice President. The Senate was adjourned. And, quickly, down the long corridors, we hurried to take our places before the platform, erected on the steps in the center of the Capitol, where the President elect was to take the oath of office. The persons whose tickets admitted them to the Senate chamber had a special section roped off for them. And, with my usual good luck, I found myself in the front row of spectators, directly facing the platform. Standing there, I saw very plainly the beautiful sight which the least superstitious of us could not



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help taking as a good omen—the shaft of sunlight that fell full on Harding's handsome, upturned face, as he took his solemn oath and began his splendid and inspired inaugural address.

That speech, I know you have read. But could you, in reading it, I wonder, sense even dimly the dignity, the earnestness, the absolute sincerity with which it was spoken? “What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Those were the words upon which Harding's lips rested as he took his oath; and no one who heard him take it could possibly doubt that this man would do all that the Lord required of him.

And—lest by any chance you have missed it—there 56 is one line in the inaugural address that I want to quote to you in italics—“We want an America of homes, illumined with hope and happiness, where mothers . . . may preside as befits the hearthstone of American citizenship. *We want the cradle of American childhood rocked under conditions so wholesome and so hopeful that no blight may touch it in its development.*”

Those, Elizabeth, to my mind, are the most important words—forming the greatest pledge—that Harding spoke that day. Many things will come to us—to women—in these next years, I believe—the things that you and I have long been hoping for. Righteous and uniform laws of marriage and divorce; just conditions of labor, which include economic independence; and others, too. But, *first of all*, the chance to bear and rear our children safely.

As to the rest of the day—I first went back inside the Capitol, where Senator Moses was giving a luncheon for the New Hampshire delegation; and, from the high, wide windows of his office watched—my plate of excellent food balanced precariously upon my lap, and my coffee growing cold—the beautiful sight of the platoons of cavalry, all mounted on perfectly matched brown horses, form about the presidential motor, and gallop off, escorting it down the Avenue; saw the great crowd, happy and cheering and orderly to the very last,

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disperse and fade away; and then came home for a much-needed rest before going out to dinner and to the great Child Welfare Charity Ball, which, to an astonishing degree, made up for all 57 the disappointment caused by the cancellation of the arrangements for an official inaugural ball.

The dinner was delightful. Our hostess, who kindly allowed us to bring the governor and his wife with us, is an ardent Republican, and this party was more or less in the nature of a jubilee! At the honor table, besides the host and hostess, sat the French Ambassador and Madame Jusserand, Governor and Mrs. Brown, and the new Secretaries of State, War, and Navy and their wives; and instead of putting ordinary place cards at the little tables which completely filled one floor of the large and lovely house where the dinner was given, the names of all the states that went for Harding were given to the men, and the women whose cards bore the names of the capitals of those states were their partners. Wasn't that a clever idea?

From the dinner, we all went on to the ball at the Willard. Mrs. Marshall, who has taken a very active part in Child Welfare work here—in fact, she has been one of the vice presidents of the organization—received the guests, looking very handsome in black and gold brocade. And, having greeted her in the anteroom—even that had temporary boxes in it!—we went into the great ballroom, lined all the way around with boxes, each containing six or eight people, and where one, decorated with a huge New Hampshire flag, was reserved for our party—Governor and Mrs. Brown, Assistant Secretary and Mrs. Woodbury, Senator Moses, Harry and myself.

Sitting in it, looking out over the throng of dancers, I knew that I had never been present at such a wonderful ball before, and wondered, involuntarily, if I ever 58 would be again. At one end of the main ballroom, which is very large indeed, and especially long for its width—giving it almost the effect of a brilliant channel—the doors were flung open into the smaller ballroom beyond, also filled with dancers and bordered with boxes, and with an orchestra of its own; at the other end—our end—in the gallery over the entrance, the

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Marine Band—the best band in the world, I believe —gorgeous in its uniforms of scarlet and blue and gold, was playing. And, among the dancers, there were of course many uniforms, too, not only the khaki and navy of our own men and the English, but the lighter blues of the Italian and French. Against them gleamed the women's dresses—satins and brocades and velvets; white, pastel shades of pink and yellow and lavender, vivid reds and greens, and every now and then an opalescent beaded robe, or a black one, heavy with jet; and with these beautiful dresses, of course, still more beautiful jewels were worn—ropes of pearls, diamond tiaras, necklaces of rubies and emeralds. Overhead, in great clusters that looked like effulgent balloons, were the lights; on either side, floating in the air, the flags of the signal corps, of the marines of the cavalry—bright blue, brighter yellow, red brightest of all; while flat, or festooned against the walls, in every available space, between entrances and boxes, were American flags. There were nearly sixty boxes in all, and in the center of one side of the large ballroom, three of these, magnificently decorated with flags and palms and flowers, were thrown together, and Mrs. Walsh, Mrs. Marshall's great friend, entertained the new Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge; Mr. and Mrs. 59 Marshall (after they finished receiving) the French Ambassador and Madame Jusserand; the British Ambassador and Lady Geddes; the Argentine Ambassador and Madame Le Breton; the Italian Ambassador, Signor Ricci; the Serbian Minister and Madame Grouitch; General Pershing; the former Secretary of Agriculture and Mrs. Meredith . . . this wasn't all; but is it beginning to sound like the rolls of the names of the fairy kings and queens that we used to read about in story books when we were little girls? Well, dear, the whole thing seemed like fairyland to me—the memory of it always will!

There was a sequel to this beautiful day—the sight which to me was most beautiful of all. On Saturday, through the kindness of the Secretary of the Navy, Harry and I were allowed to have the *Sylph* to take the New Hampshire delegation down to Mt. Vernon on the Potomac River; and, driving home from the navy yard, where I had seen the interesting ceremonies—the salutes and other courtesies always extended there to a visiting governor

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—through the dusk—I saw that the gates to the White House, which have been closed and locked for several years, were thrown open again.

My dearest love to you always, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

60

Washington, D. C. April 25.

Dear Dorothy,

Your letter, in answer to mine asking you to come and stay with me for the opening of Congress, the spring conventions and the various other official festivities of the month, caused not only a very keen personal disappointment, but a perfect flood of memories: there was no one to stay with the baby; there was very little money in the family treasury; and so you couldn't come. You don't know how familiar it all sounded! I am dreadfully sorry, and, my dear, do you think I needed your appeal to "tell you about it all, since you couldn't share in it?" I have only been waiting for my first free minute to do so!

For a little while after the inauguration there seemed to be a lull in public activities here, which gave me a chance to do some things which I had wanted to very much, but hadn't been able to make time for in the previous weeks. I think the thing I enjoyed most, and got the most out of, was going Thursday mornings to the Bible class conducted by Mrs. Spencer, the wife of the senator from Missouri. She is doing a piece of work which few women in official life have equaled, and which I believe none have excelled. The daughter of a famous clergyman, she had such a class in her home in St. Louis for years before she came here. 61 Rather reluctantly, in response to insistent demands from other senators' wives, she consented to start one here, holding the meetings on Thursday mornings through Lent. Mrs. Elkins of West Virginia, who has a large and very beautiful house, offered the use of her drawing-room. It was packed to the doors. The largest assembly room in the Washington Club was next offered by its president; that, in turn, proved too small. And now, by the courtesy of the management of the Hotel Willard, the class is held

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in the large ballroom there, and there is an average attendance of more than six hundred women every week! Mrs. Spencer knows her Bible from cover to cover, and she teaches other women to know it too! The influence of a thing like this seems to me so far-reaching as to be almost incalculable. Exactly as there are many women, unfortunately, who say, "Mrs. So-and-So does this, so why shouldn't I?" when Mrs. So-and-So is misbehaving herself, there are a good many who are beginning to say, "If Mrs. Spencer can teach a Bible class in Washington, and make a success of it, in these days when we have thought it rather 'smart' to ignore the Bible, why shouldn't I do it, in my own home town?" And why shouldn't she? I hope she will!

During these same weeks, I also began my first active work in the Congressional Club, to which I have so often referred in my letters home. I have belonged to it, of course, ever since I came to Washington, and have always enjoyed going to it very much, but I had never done any work for it until Mrs. Lenroot asked me to take the chairmanship of one of the standing committees, and I assure you that since then I have "hustled round" enough to make up for all my sins of omission in the past! The new administration in the club began its duties at about the same time as the national one, with Mrs. Lenroot, the wife of Senator Lenroot of Wisconsin, succeeding Mrs. Ward of New York as president. Mrs. Lenroot is a very gracious and delightful woman as well as a very efficient one, and the little speech with which she accepted the president's gavel sounded in a most charming way the keynote of her policy. "If every one of us," she said, "might have a little more of that sense of ownership and pride that comes with responsibility, if we might realize that we all need each other, that each one of us has something to give and something to take, with enthusiasm and loyalty and devotion to our club leavening the whole lump of our body-politic, this administration cannot fail." Isn't that a splendid spirit in which to begin? And Mrs. White, the second vice president, who is an artist and a skilled agriculturist as well as a congressman's wife, told me the other day how strongly she felt that the club should prove a never-failing center of hospitality, not only for the newly arrived "official lady," who is often lonely and bewildered—as I know very well!—when

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she first reaches the Capital City, but for the husbands of members too, who sometimes have no very satisfactory way of meeting the families of their colleagues, except at the pleasant and informal entertainments that the club affords. The immense value of having men and women from all over the country, whose interests are more or less the same, but whose outlook is naturally very different, come together, can hardly be overestimated, 63 and the realization of this fact by the executive board will be of immense value, I believe, to the club, and indirectly to the whole United States, since the whole United States is represented among its members.

By far the most important event of the “little season”—as we call the time here between Easter and the first of June—at the Congressional Club was the reception which we gave to Mrs. Harding about a fortnight ago. Each member was allowed to bring one *bona fide* house guest—but, even allowing for that, it seemed to me as I approached the club house that afternoon and tried to get inside the door that Congress must suddenly have doubled in size! It was a lovely day—I am really beginning to think that the “Harding blue” we hear so much about is in the skies, for the weather always seems to be perfect when any great event with which they are connected takes place!—and the entire block was crowded with motor cars, filled with women dressed in all sorts of fluffy, soft-colored spring gowns, slowly driving up to the entrance. The Marine Band played downstairs that day, as there was no room for it in the big reception hall, and I think it took me at least an hour to get up the wide curving staircase, which usually affords such easy and ample access to the second floor. The receiving line stood, as it usually does, at the head of the staircase—Mrs. Harding, Mrs. Coolidge, Mrs. Gillett, Mrs. Lenroot, Mrs. Frelinghuysen, Mrs. Kelly and Mrs. Hoch; and the entire Ohio delegation, in compliment to Mrs. Harding, acted as supplementary hostesses, “floating” among the guests, while Mrs. Underwood of Alabama, Mrs. Elkins of West Virginia, 64 and Mrs. Pomerene and Mrs. Longworth of Ohio, presided at the tea table, which had in the center a lovely, little miniature-fountain, surrounded by roses and daisies, bubbling and sparkling in the prettiest way that you can possibly imagine. There were southern smilax and roses all over the building, and of course our

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frieze of state flags of which we are so very proud as part of the decoration, too. It was all beautifully planned and executed, and next to Mrs. Harding herself, whose faculty for giving every woman with whom she shakes hands, even when there is an immense crowd like this, a personal greeting, seemed to me nothing short of miraculous, I think the woman who deserves the greatest amount of credit for the success of the event is Mrs. Woodyard of West Virginia, the Chairman of the Entertainment Committee.

It was during those same quiet weeks—which you will perhaps begin to think were not so very quiet after all—that Mrs. Harding received me at the White House for the first time. I went there and “left cards” of course, immediately after the inauguration, and not long afterwards a note was delivered to me “by hand,” engraved on heavy white paper surmounted by a gilt crest.

A note like this, sent from the White House, does not mean that if you have nothing else to do on that particular day you are free to drop in some time during the course of the afternoon. It means that any other engagement you may have is immediately canceled, and that, on the stroke of the hour mentioned, you present yourself at the door. But I do not think that any senator's wife, officially summoned, ever presented herself 65 more happily than I did that day, for, having known Mrs. Harding when she was a senator's wife, too, I felt that I knew exactly how I should be received—cordially and quietly and simply, as if she were really glad to see me—and I was not disappointed! We sat in a small pleasant drawing-room made very bright by quantities of flowers, and talked together for fifteen minutes or so before Mr. Hoover, the pleasant-faced man who is head usher at the White House, appeared in the doorway, and I knew that my appointment was over, and that some one else was to come in. “What did we talk about?” Why, just the kind of thing that women usually do when they visit together—what interests them most! In this case it 66 was writing. And she sent me away even happier than when I went in by telling me that when the League of American Penwomen met in Washington for its National Convention, she would like to have us all come and see her on a day and hour that she would fix later.

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("And what did she *have on?*"—I knew that would come next! It was something soft and gray and very becoming to her—she is awfully pretty, you know, much prettier than her pictures, with lovely pink cheeks, a brilliant smile, and great dignity, as well as great cordiality of manner—a rare combination! But I honestly can't remember the details of her dress.)

My quiet weeks (?) came abruptly to an end on the thirteenth of April with the beginning of the National Convention of the League of American Penwomen. I have never told you very much about the League, since, as I am first vice president of it, I couldn't, very well, without being rather personal, and I know all too well that, just as truly as no man is a hero to his *valet de chambre*, no woman is a celebrity to her old friends! But the time has come when—in spite of this handicap!—I must tell you a little about it, for with the wife of the President of the United States among its active members, and with its general membership growing by leaps and bounds, it is looming pretty large in the public eye at present. It is the largest organization of women writers and illustrators in this country—with its headquarters here, and with branches in every state in the Union. And though nearly all the big women writers—the ones whose names are "topliners"—belong to it, any woman who has written or is writing professionally is eligible to it, so that naturally we are a very democratic and cosmopolitan body. For several years, the annual book fair, carnival and ball, held here in the spring, has been an event of great local importance. But this is the first time that members from all over the country have been invited to join in the celebration. And they accepted the invitation!—from Texas and California, from Kentucky and Illinois, from New York and Missouri and Arizona and many other states as well! The first time that we saw them all together—and they were certainly well worth seeing—was at the reception which Mrs. Hoch and I gave for them together at the Congressional Club on the opening day of the convention. Any member of the club may give a party there, rent free, at any time she wishes, provided this does not interfere with one of the regular club activities, and such entertaining is made very easy, as well as very pleasant for her, by the splendid management of Mrs. Reeside, the Chairman of the House Committee,



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who sees to every detail. Mrs. Hoch and I felt deeply honored to be the first persons to entertain the women writers of the country gathered together for the first time. I wish that you might know Mrs. Hoch, Dorothy. She is the wife of a representative from Kansas, one of the vice presidents of the Congressional Club, and—since the convention—one of the national officers of the League of American Penwomen, to which she has belonged for some time, also. If you think, as I did, and as I imagine a good many women do, that Mrs. Harding is the only woman who has helped make a *Marion* paper a success, you are 68 mistaken, for Mrs. Hoch worked for years with her husband on his paper, the *Marion Record*, of Marion, Kansas, helping very materially in his success both as a newspaper man and as a politician, and still sends to it a column of brief, witty paragraphs based on current events at the Capital. She has done an immense amount of club work, and while her father-in-law was governor of Kansas, and her husband was his private secretary, she lived in the Executive Mansion—splendid training for her official life here! And, in addition to all this efficiency, she is the most exquisite sort of person to look at, with all the dark, gentle loveliness of a Spanish madonna. It has been the greatest pleasure and privilege for me to work with her, and to feel that New England and the Middle West were coöperating through our efforts!

But to go back to the party—Mrs. Coolidge, who is the best kind of a “good sport,” always ready to enter into everything—received with us, and Mrs. Lenroot, and Mrs. Du Puy and Mrs. Colman, the president and second vice president of the Penwomen; while members of the executive boards of both organizations “floated” and poured, and the Marine Band played so enticingly that the Penladies began to dance with each other, and the reception, which began in a very dignified and rather formal way, ended in a regular frolic, and we all felt like old friends before the evening was over!

The next day the carnival and book fair began in the big ballroom at the Hotel Willard, Miss Alice Robertson, the congresswoman from Oklahoma, formally opened it, speaking briefly, but with great force<sup>69</sup> and sincerity, of the tremendous responsibility, as well as the tremendous opportunity, that lies with the writers of the country to-day. And, as soon

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as she had finished, the spirit of merrymaking began, and the hall was thrown open to visitors. It was really a beautiful and inspiring sight. Mrs. Harding sent us quantities of rosebushes and cut flowers from the White House, and these were sold by pretty girls, dressed in fancy costumes, moving about through the crowds. There were booths there in charge of women from almost every state in the Union, bearing the products in literature and art from that state.

The book fair lasted for two afternoons and one evening, and during the intervening morning we went to the White House for our promised visit with Mrs. Harding.

And finally, on Friday night, we had our big costume ball at the Willard, with Mrs. Coolidge as our honor guest. The great ballroom was filled again, this time with dancers dressed to represent famous characters in fiction and history. Mrs. Du Puy as Queen Victoria, Mrs. Colman as the Duchess of Devonshire, and I as Balzac's "Woman of Thirty," received the guests, and I felt all the thrills that you and I used to have when we "dressed up" as little girls, when I got into my pale-green satin, with its hoop skirt and short, puffed sleeves and tight bodice, and my great grandmother's jewels and lace!

The convention came to an end on Saturday—so I was free to present myself Monday evening at Continental Hall in my capacity of delegate to another big convention—the thirtieth annual Continental Congress 70 of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Do you realize, Dorothy, that I have been coming to these congresses of[ and on ever since I was a very little girl? I think I was only seven years old when mother, who was one of the first "daughters" to join the society, brought me to the Continental Congress—for in those days, delegates often took their children with them, and were even allowed to bring them into the old Albaugh Theater, where the meetings were held. To those early "congresses" I owe many pleasant memories—my first real acquaintance with Washington as a city, my first visits to the White House, my first introductions to many famous men. But in those days the meetings were unbusinesslike and often almost riotous; women had had little experience in such matters; they knew nothing of parliamentary law, and nothing

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—it sometimes seemed—of keeping their tempers. The parody, “Daughters Annual Row” was heard everywhere. I think there is no better illustration of the tremendous progress that women have made within the last twenty years than in this great and powerful national society. The beautiful Memorial Continental Hall where the meetings are now held is no more different from the dingy little theater of my earliest recollections, than the knowledge and spirit of the women who throng it are different from those who used to gather in Washington when the society began its work. The President General, Mrs. Minor, was kind enough to give me a box seat on the opening night, and I never shall forget how inspiring a sight the hall was as seen from there—filled to overflowing with handsomely dressed, earnest, intelligent women, 71 and decorated with immense quantities of flags and flowers, ferns and palms. The Vice President, the French Ambassador—who presented the society with two beautiful vases and a bust of George Washington, all made of Sèvres porcelain, in behalf of the French government—and, for the first time in the history of the organization, the British Ambassador spoke. And Sir Auckland Geddes' remarks, wittily begun by addressing us as “D.A.R.-lings,” was a worthy reply to the splendid address which Mrs. Minor had given in the morning, calling upon the Anglo-Saxon races to stand shoulder to shoulder through these trying times.

One of the best speeches given before the “congress” was delivered by Dr. Rowe, the Director of the PanAmerican Union, in which he plead for the organization of societies similar to ours in *all* the American countries where great revolutions have taken place. And, after hearing his stirring words, I felt an added interest in going to the reception at the Pan-American building, given in honor of Mr. Hughes, the new Secretary of State, by the Minister of Foreign Relations of Venezuela, and the other members of the Venezuelan Special Mission, among the festivities in connection with the unveiling of the statue of General Bolivar, the great Venezuelan patriot, in New York. The Pan-American is called the most beautiful building in Washington, and as I entered it, and wandered through it that night, I felt that I should be willing to swear that it was the most beautiful in the world. In the middle of the great entrance court, an enormous fountain, surrounded by tropical

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plants, rose in a diamondlike spray, and fell bubbling into a deep pool, 72 beneath which glowed great globes of colored light. The two wide white marble staircases were crowded with people—all official Washington, two thousand strong, was there—on its way to the ballroom above, its crystal chandeliers gleaming like jewels, where the receiving line stood, and where dancing was going on and two orchestras were playing. While outside, two more marble staircases descended in the rear to the i Aztec garden, illuminated by strings of red, yellow, and blue electric balls—the national colors of Venezuela—shining over the little lake and on the annex in the rear, where, between white marble arches against a background of deep blue mosaic, a third orchestra was playing. And—to make a child's idea of fairyland—and perhaps a grown-up's tool complete, a supper which might have come straight out of the Arabian Nights, was served to those two thousand guests. Never have I eaten such wonderful things, and certainly never with such wonderful surroundings!

And now, before I say good night, I must tell you about something that I have saved until the last, not because it was least important, but because it was *most* important, and because I want you to remember it when you have forgotten everything else that the letter contains—the speech that the President made at the opening of Congress before the two bodies in the House of Representatives on the twelfth of April. Oh, you've read it, of course! More or less casually! But that isn't the way you would have listened to it if you could have sat beside me that day, after a long, long wait—for it was necessary to reach the gallery very early to get a good seat, and you would have 73 been tired and hungry before the speech began at all, and then, suddenly, you would have forgotten how tired and hungry you were. . . . You've realized, perhaps, from his pictures what a wonderful face Harding has— *it's* more than merely handsome, *it's* beautiful, and, when he speaks, *it's illumined*—and with the beautiful face goes a beautiful voice, and depth of earnestness and sincerity of expression such as I have seldom heard. One by one, clearly, convincingly, without circumlocution or evasion he drove the different points of his policy straight through to bed rock.

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“I know of no more pressing problem at home than to restrict our national expenditures within the limit of our national income. . . . Our current expenditures are running at the rate of approximately five billion a year, and the burden is intolerable. There are two agencies to be employed in correcting this: one is rigid resistance in appropriation, and one is utmost economy in administration.

”. . . A very important matter is the establishment of the government's business upon a business basis. . . . I have said to the people that we must have less of government in business as well as more business in government. . . .

“I assume that the maternity bill, already strongly approved, will be enacted promptly.”

The maternity bill has already been reintroduced, and I believe that before this letter reaches you it will have been favorably reported out—perhaps even 74 passed—for the Chairman of the Education Committee, Senator Kenyon, under whom it now comes up, is a remarkably just and clear-seeing man, in my opinion, and that opinion, which I held before, was strengthened after appearing before him at a hearing to-day. I hope this is the last speech that I shall need to make for this bill, and I believe it is—though, if it were necessary, I believe I'd be willing to camp on the Capitol steps all summer to see it passed. A woman who feels that the job of a senator's wife should be purely social said to me the other day that if I wasn't careful my name would go on that bill as a rider I To which I replied that I was very proud of my name, and *that there was no place where I would rather see it!*

Just at present, however, the place for my name is at the end of this letter! And, with ever so much love,

I am always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes .

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Washington, D. C. May 27.

Dear Sarah,

You have been very much in my thoughts ever since I got your letter saying that your mother-in-law was gravely ill, for I know just how much that has meant to you. I have pictured you driving up and down the hill to the village over the dreadful roads that we always have during the spring “mud-time” to teach school, and then getting home, after your long hard hours in the “Primary Department,” with a day's work still ahead of you. There has seemed to be nothing that I could do for you, even in the smallest way, but perhaps it will take you away from your own hard grind for an hour if you can read about the problems that other women are trying to meet, when you are meeting your own so bravely and well, and some of the pleasures and privileges that they are having—as I hope you're going to have yours some day.

The weather here this last month has gone from one extreme to the other—cold, windy, gray days, downpours of rain, then glorious sunshine and almost tropical heat. And there has been almost as great a contrast in the character of events that has kept me busy. I closed my letter to Dorothy last month by telling her that the hearings on the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Child Welfare bills had begun again, and that “I felt that perhaps before the letter reached her they would be over, and the bill “favorably reported out.” Well, they *are* over, and the bill is favorably reported out, but there was a much greater struggle before this took place than I expected. Not because of the committee—we could hardly hope for a better one. Mr. Kenyon, the chairman, is a clean-cut, crisp, clever man, unusually good-looking, with prematurely white hair, fresh rosy color, clear bright eyes, and a manner which is delightfully brisk and witty. And the fact that he is a lawyer of long experience, with an unusual talent for questioning and cross-questioning, makes him an excellent chairman, while, having long belonged to the “Progressives” in politics, he has a very open mind on all the new movements of the day. Of the other members of the committee—Senators Borah, Kellogg, McKellar, Phipps, Shortridge, Sterling, Walsh of

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Massachusetts, Warren and Wolcott—only two were antagonistic, two or three neutral, and the others favorable. But there suddenly sprang up a number of persons, who hitherto have paid little or no attention to the bill, clamoring for a right to be heard in opposition to it, and, lest there should be a charge later that it had been “railroaded through,” every one of these had to be given a chance to speak.

Haven't you always thought of the Capitol, Sarah, as a noble, imposing, white marble structure, towering in a great open square and shining in the sun, sheltering—in some way you didn't clearly define—some of the greatest men of the nation, who were engaged in doing—in some way you didn't clearly define, either—some of the nation's greatest work? It's a beautiful 77 picture—but some of the details that go to make it up are decidedly less beautiful. If you had sat, as I did, in a crowded committee room day after day, listening to a group of angry, misinformed men and women inveigh for hours at a time against a measure which, by their own confession, they usually knew very little about, I am sure you would have been filled with the same sense of spiritual nausea that I was, the same sense of utter fatigue.

And then—came Mrs. Park, the President of the League of Women Voters, speaking in behalf of the millions of women that comprise the organization of which she is president, with her quiet accuracy and splendid poise; Miss Julia Lathrop, the head of the Children's Bureau, driving the horrible statistics of infant and maternal mortality home with the same concentrated force that I have heard her use before; Mrs. Florence Kelley, General Secretary of the Consumers League, who probably knows as much about the conditions surrounding women in industry as any one in the country, and who has lived in the slums on the East Side in New York for twenty years; Dr. Josephine Baker, Director for ten years of the Bureau of Hygiene in New York City, caring for hundreds of thousands; Dr. Ellen Potter, who is doing wonderful rural work with the Division of Child Health in Pennsylvania—sane, intelligent, healthy-minded women, with thorough training and enormous experience. And, as I listened to them, I knew that the case was won. If the opposition could have enlisted one single woman with the caliber of any one of these,

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perhaps the result would have been different. As it was, I didn't even need to look at the paper to see what the report of the committee would be—and now, the next thing is the floor of the Senate for the bill!

I feel sure that one of the hardest parts of your life just now is not that you have to face all the trials you do, but that there is no chance to *stop* facing them, to think of something different and pleasanter because that, too, is interwoven with the drudgery. I certainly was very glad that, while these hearings were going on, some very delightful things were going on, too—a luncheon at the Spanish Embassy, dinners at the British and Russian embassies, two lovely parties at “Grasslands,” the pretty little country dub near here which Cleveland once used for a summer home, and the beautiful big official reception and ball which the Speaker and Mrs. Gillett gave in honor of Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge. It was wonderfully refreshing to me just then to go to them all, to talk to the interesting men and women from all over the world that you always meet at such places, and the Gilletts certainly gave their guests the “best time” you can possibly imagine, and I danced almost through my slippers, and came home, “when the last gun fired,” almost as unwillingly as I used to do from the parties at home, long ago.

The hearings being over, the next thing that especially interested me was the big Girl Scout Rally in Continental Hall early in the month. Do you realize—I didn't—that there are now ninety thousand Girl Scouts in the United States, five hundred thousand of them in the world? Surely *our* girls ought to be in on anything as big as that! For the work that is being

*Edmonston Studio, Washington, D. C. Mrs. Harding, in Girl Scout Uniform, Taken with “Laddie Boy” at the Time of the Girl Scout Meeting*

done for and by these girls is, I believe, one of the most important at the present time. In the wonderful address of welcome which Mrs. Choate, the National President, made that day, she said that the organization sought to develop four things—character, health, skill, and service; and as I looked out over the immense audience of healthy, earnest little girls, dressed in their scout uniforms, singing their scout songs, giving—as the program



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progressed—exhibitions of the practical work which they had been taught to do—I felt that the organization had certainly lived up to its ideals, and that, if there were any better ideals for our daughters to have, I did not know them. The whole occasion was a very thrilling one in every way, for Mrs. Larz Anderson presented the Edith Cavell Medal, which only societies having done the very highest type of work are entitled to receive, to the Girl Scouts, and Mrs. Harding, who greeted each girl personally after the meeting was over, and who has just been made honorary president, was given a gold “tenderfoot” pin by two honor members; and finally General Pershing, who presented the prizes won at the Field Day held on the Ellipse the week before, made a little speech of commendation and encouragement which I am sure no girl who heard it will ever forget.

The “little season” which comes between Easter and the first of June is not supposed to be so strenuous as the winter one in Washington, but in no month since I came here, I believe, have so many big, square envelopes which I knew at sight contained delightful invitations, been delivered to me by hand; and surely 80 none has meant quite so much to me as the one which reached me early last week, engraved on very heavy paper, which read:

You have, I am sure, contributed your mite towards that precious gram of that most precious substance, discovered by a woman, and used for the amelioration of that hideous disease, cancer, as thousands and thousands of other American women have done; and I wish you could have gone with me that afternoon to the East Room in the White House, where, packing it to the doors, the ambassadors and ministers of foreign countries; the members of the Supreme Court and the Cabinet of the United States and their wives; the heads of the committees in Congress especially entitled to take part in the event, like the Committee on Foreign Relations, for instance; and a few individuals who, on account of great personal generosity or some personal achievement, had been invited; all sat waiting to pay homage to the frail little woman who, as she walked up the narrow aisle and turned to face the assembly, looked for all the world as one of the dear old ladies at home does when she puts on her best black silk and starts to church—utterly unassuming and retiring,

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with a sweet, shy, gentle face, very pale and a little haggard, but lighted with a wonderful smile. Monsieur Jusserand, the French Ambassador, made a little speech of welcome; then Mrs. Meloney of New York, the editor of the *Delineator*, who first conceived the idea of the gift, and who is accompanying Madame Curie on her trip through the United States, gave a beautifully delivered and most graceful little speech; and then the President spoke.

“. . . As a nation whose womanhood has been exalted to fullest participation in citizenship, we are proud to honor in you a woman whose work has earned universal acclaim and attested woman's equality in every intellectual and spiritual activity. . . .

“We bring to you the meed of honor which is due to preëminence in science, scholarship, research, and humanitarianism. But with it all we bring something more—we lay at your feet the testimony of that love which all the generations of men have been wont to bestow upon noble woman, the unselfish wife, the devoted mother. If, indeed, the simple and common relations in life could not keep you from great achievements, 82 it is equally true that the zeal, ambition and unswerving purpose of a lofty career could not bar you from splendidly doing all the plain but worthy tasks which fall to woman's lot.”

Listening to the President then, and sitting at the meeting given in Madame Curie's honor at the National Museum that evening, when lantern slides showing the poorly equipped, bare laboratory, where, working beside her husband, she made her great discovery, were displayed, and the story of her frugal, retired life rehearsed again, I thought that if ever I needed proof of what I have always maintained—that people who keep saying, “If I had only had a chance, I might have amounted to something”—are only offering poor apologies for their lack of determination and persistence and courage—I had it then. Honestly, Sarah, no one needs a chance *given* to them; if they're worth one, they *find it!*

After the President finished speaking, Madame Curie rose, and, speaking softly but in excellent English, thanked him for the radium.

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“I accept this rare gift, Mr. President,” she ended, “with the hope that I may make it serve mankind. I thank your country's women in the name of France. I thank them in the name of my native Poland. I thank them in the name of science. I thank them in the name of humanity, which we all wish to make happier. *I love you all, my American friends, very much!*”

I still have something interesting to tell you about that I have “saved till the last,” as we used to save the 83 frosting on our cake when we were children. I have mentioned, in previous letters, how much the “*open gates*” at the White House are meaning to the general public, how gracious and kind both the President and Mrs. Harding have been in the granting of private interviews and in receiving organizations, but I haven't yet told any of you about an honest-to-goodness

Invitation to Mrs. Harding's Second Garden Party.

“White House *Party*”! And now I'm going to! In making out presidential invitation lists, official and resident society is very wisely divided alphabetically, into three groups, since of course it is too large to entertain all at once, and three entertainments are given close together. In this way no one can possibly have 84 hurt feelings. And, following the pleasant Washington custom of doing things out of doors all through the spring, Mrs. Harding gave her second garden party yesterday, and we—coming about the middle of the alphabet—went to it! The morning was dark and cold and cloudy, but, towards noon, the sun began to struggle out, and by four o'clock—the party was from five to seven—the “Harding blue,” bluer than ever, was in the skies! It was a gala day for me, for I went first to the christening of the dear little baby of the Commercial Councilor of the British Embassy, which was attended by many of the diplomatic corps, and was, of course, a most joyous occasion—the christening cake was quite the most magnificent I ever saw, with a *cradle* done in candy on the top! From there I proceeded to the east entrance of the White House, where Harry, who hadn't been able to leave the Senate earlier, met me. And, as we walked through the long corridors into the garden, with its boxwood hedges and blossoming

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rambler roses and rare magnolia in full bloom, one of the most beautiful sights I have ever beheld met my eyes. In the center of the great lawn, the Marine Band, in full-dress uniform, was playing—an immense solid circle of scarlet and blue and gold; behind and high above it rose the fountain, falling in long curving sprays of sparkling liquid light; while, in the distance, towering over the deep green trees straight into the deep blue sky, the white, perfect shaft of the Washington monument shone in the sun like a pillar of snow.

The entire ground floor of the White House was thrown open, and in the East Room an orchestra was 85 playing, and many people were dancing; but most of the guests remained out of doors, the women's dresses, in the softest, filmiest fabrics in the loveliest pastel shades, and the gorgeous uniforms which many of the men wore, adding immensely to the general brightness that pervaded everything. The President and Mrs. Harding received in the garden, and the refreshments were served there, too—all sorts of delicious drinks and ices, sandwiches and cakes, spread on long tables covered with white cloths, and protected by brilliant striped awnings. (And there was one strictly utilitarian tent, where dishwashing was going on!) Of course, practically every one that we knew was there—every one, that is, whose name came in the middle of the alphabet!—and we wandered around talking to our friends, scattered all over the grounds or sitting on the smartly painted benches under the big trees.

Do you think, you women at home, that I exaggerate when I keep telling you how wonderful Mrs. Harding is, and how much we all love her? Well, let me tell you, as I say good-by, something she did to-day, and perhaps you won't, for it's typical of what she's doing all the time. Besides the lawn party yesterday, she received the Colonial Dames to-day, and it makes me weary just to think of the hours and hours and hours that she stands on her feet *every* day, shaking hands with people! But this morning Mrs. Lenroot, the President of the Congressional Club, telephoned to Miss Harlan—Mrs. Harding's secretary—that we were having our last club festivity until fall—a picnic in the Rock Creek Park, and said, that if Mrs. Harding were out motoring, it would mean a lot to us to 86 have her come for a few minutes! We met at the Club House at four o'clock, and—each carrying

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a lunch basket containing enough supper for a hungry senator or congressman and his wife—for on this occasion we invited our husbands to supper—motored out to the picnic grounds; and we were just getting comfortably settled, when Mrs. Harding drove up. The next instant she was in the midst of us just as she was last year, cutting ham and making herself generally useful, laughing and joking and—shaking hands some more.

Well—whether you think I exaggerate or not—that's a pretty good kind of a President's wife to have!

Much love to you always—and may the load seem a little easier as you go along!

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

87

Washington, D. C. July 26.

Dear Lois,

You can imagine with what eagerness I tore open the tiny envelope addressed in Carl's handwriting when it reached me yesterday, and with what delight I learned, from the little card slipped through yours and his with a white ribbon, that "Ann" had safely arrived. No woman who has as much as I have has a right to say to any other woman "I envy you"—and yet—I can't help saying it, for the possession of a little daughter seems to me one of the most precious in the world.

It has been pretty hot here this last month. I shall probably not be able to refrain from mentioning that several times before I finish this letter, but no matter how many times I mention it, I could not make you realize how hot, for the clean, dry, shimmering heat, nearly always disappearing at sundown, which we sometimes get for a few days at a time in the Connecticut Valley, can give you no idea of the sticky, coppery, sullen violence of torridity which day after day and night after night holds Washington in its grip through the

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summer. In the shade the thermometer may sometimes rashly sink way down to ninety-eight or so, but it seems hard to find any shade. There has not, at all events, seemed to be much in the Capitol, where I have 88 spent a good deal of time. By means of what is called a “special order” it had been agreed to take up the Maternity Bill on the 28th of June during the hour of morning business—twelve to two—although the Coal Bill, which was the “unfinished business” before the Senate then, would have to come up promptly at two o'clock. And, as I entered the Senate chamber, it gave me somehow the impression of a big schoolroom near the end of the school year, filled with a crowd of hot, tired pupils who wished they could get out of it, no matter how many unlearned lessons they left behind them. There is never, as I have said before, any ventilation worth mentioning in the Capitol, and the fact that fifteen members of the House of Representatives died of respiratory diseases last year gives one food for thought. On this particular day—and all the rest of that week—the atmosphere seemed thick enough to cut with a knife. The chamber was almost full, most of the men dressed in pale-gray flannels or palm-beach cloth suits, a few in pure white linen; and, from the galleries, hung numerous charts showing the figures and statistics of the production and transportation of coal, exactly as charts are hung up in schoolrooms. It was only a few minutes after twelve when Senator Kenyon, who had risen almost immediately, was “recognized,” and though he was inevitably interrupted several times before he started, he made a clear, concise, and masterly speech, laying the Maternity Bill again before the Senate. Then Senator Sheppard obtained the floor, and made a speech which I shall never forget as long as I live; and I wish that the closing sentences could be printed in capital letters, and 89 burned into the brain of every man and woman in this country who is indifferent to the great cause which he has championed.

“Mr. President, if this nation declines to take the necessary steps to end the appalling waste of the lives of mothers and children in America, a destruction exceeding every year our total casualties in the most stupendous and terrible war of history, it will invite severest censure. The mother who faces death in childbirth is as much a soldier as the

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uniformed hero on the field of arms. The World War has ended, but not her battles or her martyrdoms. Through all the centuries that are yet to come, whenever a human life is to be ushered into existence, she must go down into the valley of another Marne, the shadow of another Somme. For her, and for the life that flowers from her blood and tears, it is a compelling duty to provide every possible safeguard, to devise every possible protection.”

Do you wonder—lying there safe with little Nancy's head on your breast, and everything that money and skill and love can do to make that hard road you have just trodden a little easier for you—that it seemed for a moment as if even the opponents of the bill, in the Senate that day, were stirred into thinking of the thousands of mothers who have not had this fostering care, and that one of them even sent a note to Senator Sheppard which read, “You have made a wonderful speech, and your bill will pass.”

But it did not stir them enough to let a vote on the 90 bill go through that day; five minutes later, a senator arose, and, in spite of Mr. Kenyon's protests, spoke for one solid hour against prohibition. By that time, two o'clock had arrived, and the Coal Bill came, automatically, before the Senate. The following day the Maternity Bill was again made a special order for the morning hour—and this time another senator rose and spoke for more than an hour on the Sales Tax! Senator Kenyon was powerless; the presiding officer was powerless. There is no rule except the very rarely used one of cloture that can prevent a senator from getting up, at any time, and speaking as long as he sees fit, on any subject. If the smallest woman's club, in the most insignificant village, conducted its business in such a way, it would be an object of scorn to every man in the place! Yet what is probably the strongest legislative body in the world to-day cannot or will not so govern its affairs.

Another thing—besides the aforementioned tropical temperature—that made my blood boil that day—was that I do not believe there was a single man in the Senate who did not know by that time how he was going to vote, and the whole thing might have been settled in fifteen minutes. And yet, after the Coal Bill had been sent back to the Committee, which hardly seemed fair to that, either, for that, too, might just as well have been decided one

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way or another then and there—and the Maternity Bill had been made the “unfinished business” in its stead, the best arrangement that could be made was to obtain “unanimous consent” to vote on it at four o'clock in the afternoon of the tenth legislative day after the 30th of June, all speeches 91 after three o'clock on that day being limited to five minutes in length. By this time another twenty-four hours had passed, a long speech had been made against the bill, and a good many pleasantries had passed—which began by a remark made by a Republican about “delivering the eulogy at the funeral of the Democratic party,” followed by the retort that the “Democratic party was not dead but sleeping,” and by another about the Resurrection at the next election—and so on. . . . All this time a terrific thunderstorm was raging (if we lived in the Middle Ages we would surely believe that there was some sinister portent in the fact that never, when the Maternity Bill was under discussion, has there been normal weather) and while the joking about death and burial was going on I seemed to see a procession of little white hearses—and a row of coffins big enough to hold a mother with her baby—and to feel that no one was doing anything to stop the procession or shorten the row. . . .

The tenth legislative day took a long time to arrive, for the Senate is not in session on Sundays, of course, or on Saturdays during the summer, and moreover it kept “recessing” instead of “adjourning”—because that does away with the hour of morning business, since a legislative day does not pass into another without adjournment—so that it was not until the 22d of July that the Maternity Bill came up again. Meanwhile, hearings on the bill before the Interstate Commerce Committee had begun again, with many of the fine speakers that have appeared for it before pleading for it again, and many new ones, too—among them General Sawyer, the President's physician. And 92 meanwhile it had, incidentally, kept getting hotter and hotter, and I was feeling pretty tired and blue, and kept thinking of you all at home, and wishing that I could get there to celebrate my birthday together, as we've been doing ever since I was seven years old. When the twenty-second finally arrived, I tried desperately hard not to think about the party we would be having at Pine Grove Farm if I were there, and not to be silly or homesick, but I didn't succeed very



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well. And when I took my seat in the gallery, between Mrs. Lenroot and Mrs. Sheppard—there were a great many senators' wives there that day, more than I have seen in a long time, and Mrs. Towner and Mrs. Longworth as well—and found that another speech against the bill was being made, it seemed to me as if I couldn't sit and listen to it! But I've never found yet—have you?—that running away from a hard thing makes it any easier, so I sat still, and gritted my teeth—and waited. And—as usual in such cases—what finally happened was worth waiting for. The speech against the bill ended. Senator Kenyon rose, and in his wonderfully swift, fluent, clear-cut way, refuted every charge that had been made against it. And finally he said, “Here is the testimony of a senator's wife—Mrs. Keyes—before my committee. She lives up in New Hampshire. She says”—and he went on to repeat the little story that I had told the story of something that happened in *our village*—to show why I began to feel, long ago, that we must have Federal help for the mothers and babies in this country. “The proof of the pudding is in the eating, Mr. President,” he ended—and then went on to give the wonderful testimony of Dr. Baker of New York City. And I sat there with all the blueness and homesickness gone, of course, in a perfect glow of surprise and pride, because Mr. Kenyon, to whom the women of America owe more than they will ever know for the way in which he has fought for them, had given me the most wonderful birthday present I ever had in my life!

But that wasn't all! The cake had been brought in, but the candles hadn't been lighted, so to speak! And, after a few minutes, they were. For when a few trivial amendments had been offered and accepted, and a few more important—and more dangerous—ones offered and turned down flat, there was a call for the ayes and noes, and by a vote of *sixty-three to seven*—acting as nearly unanimously as I have ever seen it do—the Senate passed the Maternity Bill! I got up with my heart thumping and the tears of joy rolling down my cheeks, and went out into the corridor, where I fell—literally—into the arms of Mrs. Maud Wood Park and Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton and some of the other splendid women with whom I've been privileged to work. We went downstairs, where Senator Curtis—the Republican “whip” and Senator Sheppard and Senator Kenyon—and incidentally

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numerous photographers!—were waiting for us, and out between the marble columns down the marble steps. And *that* day the sun was shining in an absolutely unclouded Heaven!

But you must not think that I have spent *all* my time at the Capitol—I took a real jaunt about a month ago, when I went, as many other officials here did, down to the Centennial Celebration of the University of Virginia. I think I realized for the first time when I saw 94 how important this event seemed to be in the opinion of every one with whom I spoke about it, that “*The University*”—no good Southerner adds “of Virginia” and is deeply insulted if you ask “which?”—is something more even than the beautiful and beloved educational shrine of the entire South, holding a position almost unique among all our institutions of learning by virtue of the actual veneration in which it is held by an immense section of the country. It is also the mold and pattern after which practically every great State University in the United States has been fashioned and established. And this being the case, it is no wonder that official Washington, not to mention representatives from one hundred and nineteen universities and colleges in this country—fifty-nine of them college presidents—and from ten foreign institutions felt it worth while to go to Virginia and join in the week's festivities.

I left Washington on a later train than most of my friends, as Mrs. Marshall Field gave a luncheon in honor of an old friend of mine from Boston that day, so I had the three-hour journey alone, through lovely country seen through a haze of heat, the green fields so thick with daisies that they looked as if they had been frosted. I reached the university at dusk, just in time to go to the organ recital with which the immense new McIntyre amphitheater, seating nearly four thousand persons, was dedicated. It was a wonderful evening. The university has the double advantage of the mellowness of age and the symmetry of one style of architecture used throughout—a combination that exists nowhere else in this country, so far as I know; 95 and that night, as I walked to the amphitheater, I saw it all

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under the light of a moon hung in a sky that was first so clear and soft that it seemed like a dark jewel in texture, and later so thickly sprinkled with stars that its radiance was blurred.

The concrete horseshoe of the McIntyre amphitheater curves around a great lawn of turf, beyond which, flanked with the feathery boughs of trees, rises the severely simple, concrete stage, built on the most classic lines, the pipes of the organ, which, for this occasion, was drawn out upon the middle of the platform, inclosed in a square chamber on one side. The following evening a pageant called "The Shadow of the Builder," in which twelve hundred persons took part, was given, dealing not only historically with the building of the university, but symbolically with the struggle that took place in Jefferson's soul, before, in the face of discouragement and ridicule and calumny, he succeeded in triumphing over it all. It was magnificently done, far the most beautiful thing of the sort that I have ever seen. But even this did not have to me the importance and deep significance of the exercises the following morning, when Sir Aukland Geddes, the British Ambassador, in a mighty speech which lasted almost an hour, made an appeal for the coöperation of all English-speaking peoples, and through that coöperation, the eventual establishment of a righteous and permanent world-peace. The subject is not a new one, of course; but never, I believe, has it been so wonderfully presented. There were many fine speeches delivered during the Centennial Celebration—by Monsieur Jusserand, the French 96 Ambassador; by Governor Davis of Virginia; by President Alderman of "*The University*"; by President Lowell of Harvard, speaking in behalf of the oldest University in this country, and by President Albert Hill Ross of the University of Missouri, speaking in behalf of all the State Universities, which, as I have said, owe their very life to Jefferson; and by many other noted men. But I believe the high-water mark was reached by Sir Aukland Geddes.

I was especially glad that the celebration included a "pilgrimage" to Monticello, Jefferson's beautiful home five miles back over the hills from the university. Halfway up the private driveway, winding between the picturesque little lodge at the gates and the big house, is the little cemetery where he and many members of his family are buried; and beside this tiny burying ground an immense rosebush, laden with crimson blossoms, had just burst

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into bloom—a gorgeous glowing mass of color against the gray stones; in the distance, beyond a valley almost as beautiful—though not quite, of course!—as the Connecticut, the Blue Ridge Mountains, true to their name, rose against a still bluer sky—altogether a wonderful picture! The only person I saw who was not impressed with it was a young man from Illinois, who remarked with feeling that he would be glad to get back home again where things were nice and flat—that “all those uneven-looking mountains made him nervous!” A viewpoint which was entirely novel, to me, at least!

President and Mrs. Alderman gave a delightful reception at their lovely home for the delegates and guests. And there, as all the time at the university, 97 my pleasure was increased by the fact that I saw a good deal of Madame Peter, the very sweet and charming wife of the Swiss Minister, who has a son studying there, and whose husband was the official representative of the University of Geneva. After I had reluctantly said good-by to my kind hostess, we all came back to Washington on the train together. I had barely time after I reached home to remove a little of the brick-red soil of my native state, with which I was pretty liberally incrustated, from my person, and put on an evening dress before it was time to start with Harry for the reception and ball which the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Coontz, and Mrs. Coontz were giving that evening in honor of the Secretary of the Navy and Mrs. Denby at Wardman Park Inn. The engraved invitations for this party were surmounted by a tiny embossed “Admiral's Flag”—blue ground with four white stars—instead of a crest, and when we entered the ballroom we saw that the same decoration—only very big ones this time, of course—had been used at either end, forming, with the addition of a mammoth white anchor, a most effective background for the orchestra. Besides this, all around the hall, and suspended on wires across it as well, hung the flags used in the Navy—“The colors”—as the American flag is always called—mingling with the pennants of the signal corps, dozens and dozens of them, floating over the heads of the dancers. It was literally “the Navy's own night,” for the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt—hasn't that a reminiscent ring?—the members of the naval committees in both Senate and House, and of course 98 hundreds of other

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distinguished persons as well were there, and every naval officer that I know, from lieutenant commanders to admirals, turned out in full-dress uniform to celebrate the gala event.

With the exception of an occasional big “official” party like the Coontzes' entertainments are growing less frequent, and far less formal in character, for even the “little season” is over now, and garden parties and *al fresco* luncheons at suburban houses, at “Grasslands” and at the Chevy Chase Club are more and more taking the place of formal eight-course dinners. But the Woman's National Press Club and the Ladies of the Senate are continuing their weekly luncheons, and I really think that some of the pleasantest ones we have had have taken place lately. I don't think I've told you anything about the Press Club before, because it still seems to be so hard for me to speak to any of my old friends of anything to which I belong because I write. The rules for membership in this are rather different from those in the League of American Penwomen: a woman must be at least partially self-supporting *at the present time* by contributions to current magazines or newspapers of recognized standing, or by publicity work of national scope, in order to be eligible; and this requirement naturally means that the members of the club are a very alert, up-and-coming group of women, with whom it is a great pleasure as well as a great stimulation to be. We have our luncheons at the Café Madrillen, a quaint little restaurant, and we nearly always have for our guest of honor some one of national note. Just recently we had Mrs. Coolidge. I had been “detailed” to go

*Copyright by Harris & Ewing A Group of the Hostess for a “Senate Ladies' Lunch ” Left to Right—Mrs. Ladd of North Dakota, Mrs. Lenroot of Wisconsin, Mrs. Keyes of New Hampshire, Mrs. Marshall, Mrs. Coolidge, Mrs. McLean of Connecticut, Mrs. Kendrick of Wyoming, Mrs. Kellogg of Minnesota*

99 and escort her to the luncheon, but as she has a motor and I have not, she telephoned me with characteristic friendliness and cordiality that she would come for me instead, which she accordingly did. Professor Charles Louis Seeger, the brother of Allan Seeger, the poet, who was killed in France, and his wife were also our guests that day, and

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between courses and after the meal was over they gave us a concert. Mrs. Seeger played the violin, and her husband a little portable organ, not more than three and a half feet long, which folded up and was carried into the café as unobtrusively as if it had been a suit case, but which had real depth and richness of tone for all that; and both performers played beautifully. About a year ago, Professor Seeger's health gave out, and he was obliged to give up his work at Leland Stanford University temporarily; and since that time, they, with their three children, a brother, and a governess, have been touring the country in a sort of glorified gypsy wagon, with a Ford truck for a foundation! You know I have always vowed that I would go caravanning some day myself—though I don't want quite so large a party when I try it!—and so I was immensely interested to hear that not one of them had had a sick day since they started, and that they had had opportunities undreamed of before to pursue the study of their art undisturbed.

But if the Press Club seems inclined to make merry as hot weather advances, the Ladies of the Senate have settled down very seriously to do some sewing for the Walter Reed Hospital, where twelve hundred young soldiers, more or less mutilated for life—rather more than less, alas! are still confined. “Room 300,” 100 Senate office building, has been set apart for our use, three sewing machines installed, and there, for three hours before lunch, from ten to one, we sew, and are just at present making much-needed gingham bags, to be hung over the foot of the patients' beds to hold their toilet articles. Prompt as I thought I was in going yesterday morning, Mrs. Coolidge was there ahead of me, busily stitching away, while Mrs. Jones of New Mexico was cutting out more work; and soon I was stitching, too, while Mrs. Harreld tied the threads of my seams and turned down the hems, and Mrs. Taylor made buttonholes, and so on, till the room was full of workers. No work which we could have undertaken could, it seems to me, be more fitting and more necessary, and the glimpses I have had of some phases of what is still going on at the hospital, while many people are sitting back and saying they are “tired of hearing about the war,” or that “the returned soldiers are being pampered, and a lot of them are frauds

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anyway,” makes me feel personally that I shall have to arrange my schedule of life in order to do more to help, if I can.

And, speaking of work for soldiers, I want to tell you about a new organization called the Belleau Wood Memorial Association, which, in memory of the two thousand men, from every state in the Union, who lie buried there, is to restore the little village of Belleau Wood as nearly as possible to its original state. The work of the organization began in a very interesting way; Mrs. James Carroll Frazer, a woman of great prominence here, was touring through the battlefields in France last summer, and stopped to buy a drink of 101 *eau sucré* from a little old peasant woman. With the usual friendliness of the French, the water-seller began a conversation. “But I don't see the village,” said Mrs. Frazer at last. “Why, Madame, there is no village of Belleau any more,” said the peasant woman quite simply. And Mrs. Frazer then and there determined that there should be! Especially since she found more and more, as she went about, the feeling of loving veneration in which the women and children of France held the memory of our soldiers. To the children these men gave the first glimpses of cheer and pleasure that they had ever known in their starved and terrified little lives; to the women a vision of chivalry after the Germans had given them one of outrage. It is to restore the homes of these women and children, still living in cellars or at best in tiny shacks perched on public squares, that the organization has been formed, and any one paying one dollar becomes a member of it, without further dues or obligations of any sort. Memorials like this, which are to do some constructive good in the world, seem to me so much more fitting than marble shafts and stained-glass windows! “We know of no greater memorial than homes,” one family, each member of which has sent a dollar unsolicited, has written; and apparently a good many people feel the same way, for the Association has not only the written indorsement of the President, the Vice President, the French Ambassador, the Secretary of the Navy, the Speaker of the House, nineteen senators, nine representatives, and many other distinguished men on its Executive Committee; but on the 7th of June, the third anniversary of the battle of 102 Belleau Woods, Senator Lodge, speaking for the Republican Party, and Senator Overman,

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speaking for the Democratic Party (whose lovely daughter, Mrs. Gregory, is, by the way, Chairman of the work in the southern states, while Mrs. Wadsworth, wife of the senator from New York, holds the same position in the north), both indorsed the undertaking and urged its support—a very rare tribute to a woman's venture, as you know only too well if you follow legislation as carefully as I do! After asking “unanimous consent” for printing in the *Congressional Record* a “memorandum of this great event which really stopped the German Drive,” and outlining the aims of the organization, Senator Overman said, “I desire at the proper time to call to the attention of the Committee on Appropriations the request of the present that this organization be given the privilege, hardly ever accorded, of franking (that is, sending out mail unstamped), in order that they may send letters to the patriotic people of the United States for the purpose of securing contributions and subscriptions to this splendid effort that is to be made. . . .” “Mr. President, I desire to say only a few words supplementing what has been so well said by the senator from North Carolina,” said Senator Lodge. “I hope the women who are engaged in this work may receive every possible encouragement. It is one of those objects with which every one must feel the greatest sympathy.” Indorsements like these are, of course, of almost inestimable value, and I feel perfectly sure that the undertaking is going to meet with the success that it deserves.

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And now, in saying good-by, I have something to tell you which I hope is going to please you. *I am coming home for two months!* Washington is a lovely dwelling place where great responsibilities and great opportunities are given to those who come here as I have, *but it's never home!* Home is Kansas—or California—or Tennessee—or wherever a senator happens to come from, *always*. To me—well, you know what it is to me—broad meadows sloping down to a quiet river, with the Green Mountains of Vermont on one side of it, and the White Mountains of New Hampshire on the other, both equally dear to me! The big cool house so far away from everything that is noisy or dirty or ugly; and the best friends that I have in all the world!



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Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Pine Grove Farm, North Haverhill, N. H. Sept. 23.

Dear Lelia,

I am stealing the time to write to you, feeling rather breathless after getting my eldest son off to boarding school, and seeing no prospect of recovering said breath before getting the “middle-sized bear” off next week, while the youngest assists (?) in the preparations for closing the house and goes along with me when I reluctantly start back to Washington via New York the first of October. I stumble over half-packed trunks wherever I walk, and in the brief moments when I sit down, masculine garments in various sizes but in about the same state of disrepair confront me to be mended and marked, pressed and let down. . . . Do you ever have moments of feeling that a woman who brings up three sons, and keeps them out of the penitentiary and the poorhouse and the morgue, ought not to be expected to do much else? I confess that I have such moments, and that I am in the midst of one now!

However, as you know, I *am* expected to do a good many other things, most of them very agreeable ones, too, and these two months away from Washington have slipped by with such pleasant haste that I hardly know where they have gone. I don't suppose that a woman who has lived most of her life in Washington and Virginia, and is used to the climate, can realize what it meant to a New England woman to escape from the brassy heat of the Capital after sweltering there through most of May and all of June and July. The Federal Express to Boston, on the night of the 30th of July, was about as cool and breezy as a Turkish bath, but I boarded it with delight, for I felt sure that I would get up the next morning in a very different atmosphere—and I did! So different, indeed, that I sneezed as I began to pull wraps that I had not needed in months out of my baggage! I spent a blissfully quiet Sunday in Boston—such a Sunday as I never get in Washington,

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you may be sure! And very early Monday morning I started by motor for the “President's Day” Celebration at the Plymouth Tercentenary.

It was a typical New England day, cool and bright, with a stiff wind blowing from the northwest, and whitecaps frothing on the sparkling blue waters of the bay. And, as we sped along beside it, I wished very much that you were with me, for I remember my horror when I asked you if you were familiar with New England, and you said yes, indeed, you had spent part of several seasons in Newport and Narragansett! The glimpses of New England that you would have had that day would have showed her to you in her truest colors and at her very best—a little austere, perhaps, but wonderfully clean and wholesome, and peaceful and inspiring. Never have I seen the countryside look so much as if it had been newly scrubbed and scoured for a great occasion! Even the brass buttons of the policemen stationed at intervals all along the 106 way to control the traffic glittered in the sun from recent polishing, and the frequent guideposts with arrows pointing “To Plymouth” were immaculately white. And oh, Lelia, it did all seem so good to me! I do not wish to make a poor parody on Mark Twain's famous statement that the more he saw of men the better he liked dogs, but there are certainly moments when the more I see of Washington the better I love New England!

The automobile pass which had been sent me as an “official guest” enabled me to get through the heavy congestion of cars from practically every state in the Union, which, early as it still was, began several miles outside of Plymouth. The town was beautifully decorated—long white pennants and festoons with cuts of the *Mayflower* printed on them in deep blue mingling with American flags and tricolored bunting; and, making my way slowly through the immense crowds—there were nearly one hundred thousand persons there—I hurried off to the charming Old Colony Club, which had been hospitably thrown open to the special guests of the day; and, finding every door and window already crowded with spectators, calmly climbed out on the roof of the front porch, and, supported

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by a flagpole, seated myself comfortably, and found that with my usual good luck I was in the best possible place to see everything that was going on!

President and Mrs. Harding and the presidential party had arrived an hour or so earlier on the *Mayflower*—the namesake of the fragile little craft whose arrival, three centuries ago, on these same shores, we were celebrating—and presently a fine military band 107 began to play, and, headed by the motor carrying them and followed by those containing the Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge, the governors of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Hampshire, the Speaker of the House and Mrs. Gillett, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Mr. Weeks, the Secretary of War, General Edwards, Dr. de Beaufort, the official representative of Holland, and Captain Bayley, the official representative of Great Britain, and many other distinguished guests, a parade, in five divisions, with thirty bands and drum corps, began, which lasted an hour and a half, and which, in every respect, surpassed anything of the kind which I have ever seen.

When the last float had passed, and the streets were thrown open again, I climbed down, and walked through the huge, good-natured crowd to the Plymouth Tavern, where, in an immense upper room overlooking the sea, a luncheon was served to about three hundred guests of the town, and, as there were only six women present, I felt very much flattered to be included in the invitation. Ex-Governor Foss of Massachusetts, whose daughter-in-law is a cousin of mine, took me in to lunch, and, of course, gave me a delightful time. The luncheon was delicious—chilled melons, clam chowder, scalloped cod with cucumbers and corn, lobster salad, and *biscuit Tortoni*—the sea foods for which the Massachusetts coast is famous, well-represented, you see! So altogether I enjoyed myself very much indeed, and was almost sorry when it was time to seek out my motor again, and go down to the big grand stand, erected by the curving, sandy beach where Plymouth Rock stands. In the center of the beach was 108 a small raised platform where a military band was playing; and soon the presidential party, with its escort of cavalry, and preceded by the Aleppo Temple Band of Boston, one hundred and sixteen strong, dressed in gorgeous, zouave uniforms of crimson and gold, swung into sight, and, after having been introduced

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by Governor Cox of Massachusetts and William S. Kyle, the Chairman of the Plymouth Tercentenary Celebration, the President rose from the chair which, three centuries ago, was the official seat of Governor Bradford, and made the speech which from one end of the country to the other seems to have been acclaimed as the greatest he has so far delivered.

I have no doubt that you have read it, and, therefore, what he said about disarmament and universal brotherhood, about the dangers of too much Federal power, about the domestic situation and the international prospect, is doubtless familiar to you already. But did you notice the frequent coupling of the achievements of Massachusetts and Virginia? "Three centuries ago. . . to this and to the Virginia shores were transplanted the seeds of representative democracy. . . . Doubtless the English Revolution would have come . . . even if there had been no Massachusetts Bay Colony, no Virginia plantation. . . . The community of free people of our race. . . was begun when Jamestown and Plymouth were founded." These phrases seem to me to contain much more than a mere historical reference to the past; they show the constant presence in the President's mind of the ideal of a country which is neither northern nor southern, neither republican nor democratic, but wholly American. 109 There is no better "platform" for an administration than this. Nor is there any saner and loftier political doctrine preached to-day than that contained in the one short sentence in which he said, "It is good to keep our feet firmly on the earth, though we gaze in high hope for human brotherhood and high attainment."

Before the President began to speak, he turned to Mr. Kyle, and asked him to allow the crowds, which of course were far too great to be accommodated on the grand stand, and who were being held back, practically out of earshot, to come down on the beach and fill in the vacant place around the platform; and, with a great cheer, as soon as they heard the order, they surged forward, past the boy scouts and policemen on duty, and entirely covered the beach. Then, before he began to read from his notes, the President made an informal little speech, delivered with charm and humor —intimacy almost—which is hard to achieve on an occasion like this. "I like Governor Cox's pride in Massachusetts just

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as I like Vice President Coolidge's faith in Massachusetts," he said; "but I want to tell you egotistical Yankees that Plymouth Rock doesn't belong to you, but to all America and all humanity. . . . I have been to see it before, but nobody paid much attention to me then." And this was followed by a remark that he was glad that this was so, for it proved that while Americans were not, as a rule, respecters of persons *as such*, they should be—and usually were—respecters of law and order as personified by the Chief Executive. I cannot quote his exact words to you—I wish I could—and no one else, apparently, has quoted 110 them at all; but to me they were among the most significant that he uttered. We cannot show a lack of proper respect to a man in high office, without, in many cases, insulting the office itself; and for no better reason than that we may disagree with some of the opinions, political or otherwise, of a man in public life, we are apt to condemn him in a way which is neither intelligent nor just.

"For me the pageant, and, indeed, the whole day, was an unforgettable experience," he said afterwards; and for me, too, the entire occasion will always remain unforgettable. But I think perhaps the most beautiful sight of all was Plymouth Bay as the sun went down. The shining deep blue of the sky turned to wonderful pale colors—violet and rose and Nile green—over water from which all the whitecaps had vanished, and which lay still as an inland pool. It grew dark, and the stars came out; darker still, and the great battleships across the harbor began to throw their searchlights over the bay, long, slender, moving shafts of radiance darting across the sky and the sea. Then, out of the silence, came "The Voice from the Rock" which was the prologue of the pageant. And suddenly, near the shore, appeared a snow-white ship guided by snow-white oars, beautiful beyond description, unearthly as a swift, shining apparition—the phantom skiff of Thorwald the Norseman. Wonderful as the rest of the performance was, following faithfully the history of the early settlement of this country, and the story of the Pilgrims in England, Holland and Massachusetts, there was no moment in 111 it, to me at least, that equaled this one in dramatic splendor.

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“Men pass; ideals go on.” This was the message which ran through spoken word and acted scene during the great performance, in which more than a thousand persons took part, for which the poems and music were written by the greatest authors and musicians in America to-day, and which, in the course of the summer—for it has been given about a dozen times altogether—has drawn more people to it than anything of the kind ever given before. And it is true. The Pilgrims have passed—the little hand of humble men and women who came here so long ago; but their ideals have gone on ever since. There are no better ones in the world to-day. There never will be.

I came home the next day from Boston feeling a good deal the worse for wear, and was really quite ill for a week. This was not a particularly cheerful home-coming, and it interfered rather seriously with much that I meant to do that month; nevertheless, if I had to be sick, I am glad it was where I could lie and look out at our lovely Connecticut Valley, green and peaceful in the August sunshine, and not at the sizzling pavements of Washington! But a senator's wife, who, I long ago discovered, is never supposed to be tired, cannot even be sick in peace, because there is always so much for her to do staring her in the face that the thought of it jerks her to her feet again at the first possible moment. And her duties are by no means confined to the time that she spends in Washington, as you may comfortably imagine. Wherever she goes, her enormous correspondence follows her relentlessly about, and once this gets ahead of her, the task of getting “caught up” again is almost insurmountable; and no matter what happens to herself or her household, it must never be “inconvenient” for her to have company. The wife of any man holding an important public office must always be prepared to entertain large gatherings of people, sometimes at very short notice, and I have fed as many as two hundred and fifty people here without the help of a caterer. Then, in a state like New Hampshire, where tourists come from all over the world in the summer, unexpected motorfuls of guests drive up at any moment for lunch or dinner or a week-end, placidly undisturbed by a possible lack of provisions, in addition to the fairly large amount of company which *is* expected; and besides the visitors from afar, there are, of course, the old friends at home, who must be

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seen whoever else goes by the side, not because they are constituents—though as such they have a perfect right to make demands upon the time of their representatives—but because, in most cases—certainly in mine—they are the oldest and dearest friends in the world, and the shorter the time at home is the more important it is to be with them as much as possible.

But, in spite of all there has been to do, there have been a few quiet mornings—not nearly as many as I hoped for—in the big, still, fragrant pine grove near the river, where I can look across to the broad, velvety meadows on the Vermont side, and tread over glistening cobwebs and crackling branches and soft pine needles, with birds and chipmunks for my only company, and an unbroken space of time, a sense of peace 113 and inspiration for writing that I never get anywhere else; there have been a few not nearly as many as I planned—long motor rides back over the mountains on clear, sunny afternoons, when, after hungering for them all winter, I have been able to “lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help”—really, I know of nothing but that beautiful Bible verse to express my feeling about them. There have been parties given for me in the neighborhood and parties here—Harry had a week-end one of senators “and such”—eight of them in all—and I have had a big afternoon reception for the four Chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution in this part of the valley. It was a beautiful day—and I never saw the place look prettier, with the splendid blue State Flag, which, as an ex-governor, Harry is entitled to fly, floating out over the porte-cochère, the “Stars and Stripes” on the high flagpole opposite, the driveways bordered with crab-apple trees laden with bright red fruit, and the shrubs and lawns at their very loveliest. Mrs. Webster, the State Regent, motored up from her summer home at Square Lake to receive with me while the State Regents of the local chapters presided over the coffee and tea and punch in the dining room. We had a very good orchestra, and Mrs. Webster made a delightful informal speech. The house was decorated with flowers from attic to cellar. So altogether it was a gala event for Pine Grove Farm, you see, and every one seemed to enjoy it very much.

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Besides these festivities at home, I have been away on two delightful trips, the first time to Portsmouth, 114 to attend the reception given by the Colonial Dames of New Hampshire at the beautiful and famous Moffatt-Lad House, which, through the generosity of its present owners, has come into our possession on a long lease. It was another of my “sent-straight-from-Heaven-weather” days, and, as I went upstairs to leave my wraps in the lovely chamber with its white-canopied, four-posted bed, its hand-woven, brightly colored flowered rug, as thick and velvety as an oriental one, its white wainscoting and carved mantel, I stopped to look out at the lovely garden scene beneath me, and, again, halfway down the stairs, from the high arched window on the landing. For it was a beautiful sight! The crimson rosebush, from which, according to tradition, every bride of the Moffatt family has picked her wedding flowers, still blooms there, in all its sweet-smelling glory; and, besides, asters and dahlias and hollyhocks, larkspur and phlox, pansies and sweet-william and tall scented lilies, in the splendor of their late summer bloom, filled the flower beds with masses of color, and bordered the trim gravel walks; dusters of grapes, just beginning to ripen, hung over arbors and trellises; fruit trees stood covered with glossy dark green leaves and vivid ripening fruit. And, in the midst of all this loveliness, the Navy Band in its smart, bright uniforms was playing, and groups of well-dressed men and women were walking back and forth, or sitting in groups beside the sundial and bird bath, or drinking punch served at a white-covered table set under the widespreading branches of an ancient tree near the old counting house.

It was hard to tear myself away from such an 115 attractive scene, but I managed to, at last, and then, with all sorts of pleasant, merry greetings, I was pulled into the receiving line, where Mrs. Arthur Clarke, the President of the New Hampshire Dames, and several of the other officers, with Mrs. Brown, the Governor's wife, and Mrs. Burroughs, the wife of Congressman Burroughs, were already standing, at the foot of the magnificent staircase, a mahogany table with the most gorgeous bunch of larkspur—white, blue, pink and lavender—that I have ever seen, standing on it, as a background. In the course of the afternoon we welcomed several hundred guests—officials of the city and state, naval officers from the



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Portsmouth Navy Yard with their wives, summer visitors from Rye and York and Kittery, and Dames, not only from our own state, but from New York and Pennsylvania and Rhode Island, and even from as far away as Minnesota and Missouri and Georgia—all very envious, you may be sure, of our beautiful house! And meanwhile, in the stately dining room, Mrs. Erwin, the wife of the Commandant of the Navy Yard, with other prominent Portsmouth women, presided over a tea table laden with sweet peas and beautiful old silver and glass, and, incidentally, with drinks and cakes and sandwiches—“sugar and spice and all things nice!”

September hardly seems complete, nowadays, without going to an agricultural and industrial fair, so I'm going to tell you about my second trip away from home this month. I went on Sunday, taking John with me, to the great Eastern States Exhibition at Springfield, Massachusetts, which all the New England 116 States, and, to a lesser degree, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, New Jersey and New York are combining to make a very important event. The festivities in honor of the official guests began on Sunday evening, with a reception at the Colony Club in honor of the six New England governors, who had all arrived for “Governor's Day” in the course of the afternoon and evening, and who with their staffs and the attending local committees, escorted by a guard of honor from the National Guard and headed by the 104th Regiment Band, marched through the streets and entered the club while the battalion drew up alongside and presented arms, through a double line of Naval Reserves—a very attractive ceremony, seen from the dining room windows, for John and I were doubly fortunate in being invited not only to the reception, but to dinner at the club beforehand. Mrs. Lake, Mrs. Hartness, and Mrs. Brown, the wives of the governors of Connecticut, Vermont, and New Hampshire, all came with their husbands, and so did a number of the women whose husbands are on the governors' staffs—many of them old friends, whom I was delighted to see again! And Mr. Gillett, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, was there with Mrs. Gillett, who is, by the way, one of the most lovely and charming women connected with national political life. The Colony Club, which was originally built by Mr. Wesson, the enormously wealthy

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manufacturer of firearms, is wonderfully well suited for an occasion of this sort, with its great spacious rooms opening into each other, and its wide staircase.

The first thing I heard Monday morning was the 117 honking of the automobile which had come to take John from the lovely house where we were being entertained to the breakfast given at the Nyasset Club for the male guests of the city—a thrilling experience for a fourteen-year-old boy! but I was thankful, as I sat up in bed somewhat sleepily, that the “official ladies” were allowed to proceed in a more leisurely fashion! We met the members of the Springfield Woman's Club who were taking charge of us at the Hotel Kimball at ten, and went from there straight to the Exhibition Grounds; and a fine sight they presented as we drove through the white-pillared gates! At the left stands the coliseum, the big building where the cattle are shown, and Mechanical Hall, which contains the special exhibits from the different neighboring states, and in front of which were temporarily erected little portable houses as “Headquarters” for the six New England governors, each flying a state flag and adorned with the state coat of arms; on the right, the large building given over entirely to the exhibits of the Junior Achievement Bureau, and I must confess that nothing thrilled or surprised me so much as this building, with its motto, “Make the Best Better,” confronting us as we entered. More than one hundred clubs of boys and girls belonging to the Bureau exhibited, and these, I am glad to say, included orphan asylums and technical schools, whose work, it is just as well to add, was quite as superior in quality and as great in quantity as that from institutions whose pupils are in more prosperous circumstances! Animals of all kinds—provided they are raised and owned and exhibited by the youngsters themselves—are welcomed 118 along with the neat rows of beautifully preserved fruits and vegetables, the basketry and wood carving and the model quarry. In the middle of the hall beside a plow of the most up-to-date pattern stood the one which Daniel Webster, as a poor boy on a New Hampshire farm, turned up the furrows of rocky soil, while underneath the two implements ran the saying which the same boy—or rather the famous senator whom this same boy had become—“The glory and prosperity of our Union are based upon the accomplishments of agriculture.” I felt, as I looked around me, that the glory

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and prosperity of the Union were entirely safe in the hands of the boys and girls who had provided the splendid show before me!

The exhibitors were given opportunities to sell their wares, and we saw one rather pathetic example of what sometimes happens then, which seems to be pretty firmly engraved on my memory. When we first went to the exhibition, a boy about fourteen years old was standing beside his calf, patting it, and murmuring loving and encouraging words in its ear while he waited for the possible purchaser who meant, probably, a chance for more schooling for him, or an easier time on the farm for his mother. When we returned, two hours later, the calf was gone. The boy stood counting his money—a big roll of fresh, crisp bank notes—but, as he counted, big, unashamed tears were rolling down his cheeks.

The governors had their lunch at the “beef-steak barbecue” served on the grounds, but the “official ladies” were whisked away to the Colony Club again in motors, where a delightful luncheon for twenty-four 119 was given in our honor. After lunch we went back to the Exhibition, stopping for a few minutes to look at the first train ever run in the United States—the quaint, inadequate engine with its three yellow-bodied coaches, built by De Witt Clinton and used on the New York Central Railroad, where the six governors, in the best of spirits, were having their pictures taken, with Governor Cox of Massachusetts as engineer, and Governor Baxter of Maine as fireman! Then we went on to the grand stand, where seats had been reserved for us to see the horse racing, and it was certainly a thrilling event, for “Single G”—the world-champion pacer—won the first heat in the free-for-all race, establishing a new record on an eastern state track, and, of course, arousing unbounded excitement! After dinner I went with our host and hostess, who were also entertaining Governor Sans Souci of Rhode Island, to the horse show. It was a long time since I had been to one, though I have always loved them, and it was a great pleasure to me to see the vast coliseum, crowded to the last seat, the oval of tanbark with the decorated stand for the judges in the center, and the jockeys in their “pink” (scarlet) coats, the beautiful horses and equipages, the skilled drivers and riders. The boxes which the governors were to occupy were decorated with American flags and tall sprays of flowers, and after the first

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two entries, in came all six together again, on top of a handsome tally-ho drawn by four superb horses. After they had circled the ring several times, while the audience rose and clapped and cheered, and were being escorted to their boxes, a voice from the audience rang out—"which governor gets the blue 120 ribbon?" And though that would be a hard question to answer, Governor Sans Souci certainly proved a very delightful addition to our box party!

Besides the regular entries for the evening, there was a military drill by a detachment from the 2d Infantry of the National Guard, headed by its fine band, an "Educational Display"—not competing for prizes—of draft horses, and another of dairy cattle. Round and round the ring they went, so many of them that it was crowded, superb animals ranging all the way from tiny calves to great powerful oxen, of every breed, scrubbed and shining, even the ends of their tails marcel waved! And among the dozens of men and boys exhibiting their stock, walked *one* little girl, not more than ten or twelve years old, dressed in pink gingham, a soft twist of dark hair falling down her back, perfectly self-possessed and at ease, leading a fine Jersey cow! It was certainly a magnificent display of the cream of the dairy world—forgive my levity!—which showed, by the way, every sign of having been treated with the milk of human kindness!

And now, if I shirk those half-packed trunks any longer, I shall never get to Washington! So good-by, my dear, and picture me hard at work as you sit comfortably reading this!

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

121

Washington, D. C. Oct. 29.

Dear Bertha,

I was terribly sorry when I found that you had been in Washington last week, and that I had not been here to try to help make your visit a pleasant one. But I have not been here

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much this month, and I have come to have a good deal of sympathy for the man who left a note saying that he was committing suicide because he was so tired of dressing and undressing—for I have begun to feel that I might do something desperate myself if I could not stop packing and unpacking! Having closed Pine Grove Farm for the winter, I stopped off in New York on my way to Washington, to go to the first annual convention of the World Service Council, the group of one hundred and fifty women, chosen from every state in the Union, to coöperate with the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association. It was an experience which, in many ways, meant a great deal to me, and my attendance greatly increased my interest in going, for the first time, to the new Grace Dodge Hotel, built here in Washington by the Y. W. on purpose for, and exclusively for, women, when Mrs. Wallace, the wife of the Secretary of Agriculture, gave a reception a few days ago in honor of 122 Dr. Katherine Bement Davis of Vassar College. I could hardly have seen it under more favorable circumstances, for the reception rooms, in their soft, restful tones of cream and brown, with flowered chintz hangings, were beautifully decorated with enormous chrysanthemums and lovely pink roses, and the tea tables were presided over by prominent official women. But I think that any guest going there cannot possibly fail to find it attractive and comfortable, and that it will prove a veritable godsend to hundreds of women coming alone to Washington seems to me already very evident from the splendid work that it has already accomplished since it was opened.

From New York I went direct to Richmond to speak before the Virginia division of the Daughters of the Confederacy on the subject which, as you know, has been very near to my heart for a long time—the proper restoration of the Lee Mansion at Arlington. I do not think that any invitation I have ever received has pleased me more than the one to make this speech, and the very great kindness shown to me personally, and the warm enthusiasm for the plan I was advocating, touched me more than I can tell you. At the end of the business session, Mrs. Westmoreland Davis, the wife of the Governor of Virginia, and herself a member of the organization, gave a beautiful reception to the delegates and guests, and as I stood beside her in the receiving line, my arms full of the gorgeous

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crimson roses which Mrs. Cabell Smith, the President of the Virginia division, had sent me, I must confess that my mouth watered with envy at seeing how Virginia—which, I am learning, does most things well!— 123 lodges her governors! For the executive mansion, which was built in 1812, is one of the most altogether charming houses that I have ever beheld. On one side of the wide entrance hall, with its landscape paper and carved white arches and pillars, is a library lined to the ceiling with books, on the other a drawing-room hung with pale blue brocade; back of these two rooms the hall expands to the full width of the house, forming a ballroom, at the end of which is a dining room large enough to seat fifty persons, done in white and gray, its gray satin portieres flecked with rose-color, its chandelier, like those in all the other apartments, of shining crystal; and in the chamber upstairs where we left our wraps was a great four-posted bed, far antedating our own Colonial period in design, such as I have seen before only in the castles of France and England.

I next spent a week-end with my neglected family, finding time, incidentally, to go to a delightful concert in the Assembly Hall of the Cosmos Club—once the barn where the famous Dolly Madison kept her coaches and horses, and very little changed, except for fresh paint, since that time, for the old hay loft, now used for a gallery, is still intact!— by two singers from the Riga Opera Company, who were dressed most attractively in native costume, and who sang very well indeed. Mrs. Chindblom, wife of Representative Chindblom of Illinois, one of the most attractive and talented women in the congressional circle, played the accompaniments, while Mr. Charles Louis Seya of the new Latvian Legation acted as host, and Princess Luormirska, wife of the Polish Minister, headed the 124 list of patronesses. Early the next week, however, I *packed* again, and went once more to Virginia, this time to attend the celebration of the installation of Dr. Chandler as President of William and Mary College on the one hundred and fortieth anniversary of the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. I reached the quaint, lovely old town, its college buildings mellow with age and shaded by splendid trees, in time for a delightful and delicious dinner at College Hall, followed by very witty after-dinner speeches, and for the

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reception at Dr. Chandler's house after it; and bright and early the next morning—much brighter and earlier, you may be sure, than any less important occasion ever lures me out of bed!—I started with Dr. Dillard, the rector of William and Mary, and other members of the Faculty, to the presidential party at Yorktown upon the arrival of the *Mayflower*.

The foliage along the way was beautiful—less brilliant, I think, than our New England autumn coloring, for there is not so much crimson in it, and more bronze color and gold—and the usual “Harding blue” was in the skies and the sparkling waters of the deep harbor, for it was a perfect day. As we approached the pier, the presidential salute of guns was booming out, and, a few minutes later, the launch docked carrying the Secretary of State and Mrs. Hughes, Mr. Mellon, the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Weeks, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of Commerce and Mrs. Hoover, the Prince de Béarn, representing the French Government—in the absence of Ambassador Jusserand—General Sawyer, and several other guests, followed, soon after, by the launch bringing the President 125 and Mrs. Harding—Mrs. Harding, dressed, as usual, in the very acme of good taste and simple elegance, in a pleated dress of soft black material, a small black hat, and a black cloak with a wide gray fur collar. A line of automobiles, decorated with American flags, was waiting to take us to the monument, and there, standing at the base of the tall granite shaft, the sunlight on his fine face, Mrs. Harding, as always, beside him, the President made one of those marvelous speeches of his which never fail to touch and stir not only the comparative few who are fortunate enough to hear them, but the hundreds of thousands who read them all over the country.

“Here, one hundred and forty years ago to-day, Washington accepted the surrender which meant at last the freedom of the Colonies, the establishment of national independence, the assurance of this great experience in popular government which we have since conducted. . . . It is good to dwell in the atmosphere of historic Yorktown and to recall the lessons of the immortal Washington because our own feelings of devotion are thereby emphasized. We would not wish ours to be other than a forward-looking republic, but we will fail in coming to the supreme fulfillment if we do not recall the beginning and the

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unalterable foundation on which we have builded. . . . Our thoughts have lately been concerned with events which made history on the scale of a world rather than a continent. Yet the lesson is the same. It is the lesson of real interdependence among the nations which lead civilization. . . . The time has come when there must be 126 recognition of essential coöperation among nations, devoted, each in its own and peculiar national way, to the common good, the progress, the advance of all human kind. . . . Let us hope that we stand at the dawn of a new day, in which nations shall be stronger for contribution to the world's betterment, because each will feel the assurance of common purpose and united aspiration and the security of a common devotion to the ends of peace and civilization.”

From Yorktown we were taken back to Williamsburg in a private car, and Governor Davis of Virginia, with Mrs. Davis and Dr. Chandler, were waiting to receive us at Dr. Chandler's house when we arrived. The formal exercises then took place, with Governor Davis presiding, and President Harding and Dr. Chandler both making speeches, and honorary degrees being given to President and Governor Davis, and numerous other distinguished men. After these exercises were over, we went back to Dr. Chandler's house for a delightfully informal luncheon, before we made our pilgrimage to Jamestown, where, in the ruins of the old church, President Harding laid a laurel wreath upon the tomb of Governor Yeardley. The luncheon was really “great fun” in exactly the sense that we would have used the term when we were girls, for Mrs. Harding was in the best of spirits, Mrs. Hoover has a wonderfully friendly smile and manner, Mrs. Davis possesses all the charm and grace of the finest type of southern gentlewoman—and if anything finer than that was ever created, I have yet to see it—and Mrs. Hughes, beside whom I was 127 fortunate enough to sit, is everything that you would wish the ideal wife of a Secretary of State to be—made into a reality! With four such women present—not to mention a dozen or more other very charming and interesting ones—a party could hardly fail to be a great success; while General Sawyer, in whose motor I went to Jamestown, is one of the best story-tellers to whom I ever listened, and kept us in gales of laughter all the way with his apparently inexhaustible fund of merriment. But I got something more from the speeches that were



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made that day, and from the spirit that was shown, than I did from anything else. President Harding, in his address, paid a high tribute to the young men and women who work their way through college, saying that the “ultimate valuations” of the careers of the persons he had known who had done so had “seemed to warrant impression that education which comes high to its possessor is worth several times as much as education which merely comes high to sacrificing and struggling parents.” He paid a tribute, also, to the small college everywhere—“which democratizes higher education, and brings it within the vision and means of the average young man and woman”; and gave a definition of the change in the status of higher education which I shall not soon forget—“It has come to be not the privilege of the fortunate few, but the obligation and the due of society to the very largest possible number of its members.” As I listened to him the splendor of the struggle of the poor student, the wonderful function of the small college, the opportunity of education, which have all seemed very great and very beautiful to me always, 128 seemed greater and more beautiful than ever before. And something else was driven home, too, with a force and a clarity that were almost overpowering: William and Mary College, though it is second only to Harvard in antiquity among American colleges, never has been rich, and probably never will be; its buildings, its scientific equipment, its endowment, are all sadly inadequate. It has never been a large college —though its enrollment now is five times as large as it was three years ago—and for seven years after the War between the States, when most of it lay in ruins, President Elwell went out every morning to ring the college bell for chapel— *without a single student to answer to his call*, triumphantly sure that, in the end, boys would return to those battered halls of learning again. But, in spite of all these handicaps, William and Mary has given to our country three presidents of the United States—Jefferson, Monroe and Tyler; four justices of the Supreme Court, among them the great John Marshall; four signers of the Declaration of Independence; twenty-nine United States senators; twenty-two governors; three speakers of the House of Representatives; and ten Cabinet officers! Can we possibly ask—or receive—any greater proof that an institution, like an individual, with the will and the ability to do good work will do it—even if it must sometimes build bricks without straw, those bricks will be built! And that how many

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graduates a college turns out, or how many deeds an individual performs, forms a very much less important consideration than *what kind?*

On my return from Williamsburg I found an envelope 129 with the gilt crest of the White House stationery lying on top of my big pile of mail, and, inside it, a pleasant note from Miss Harlan, Mrs. Harding's secretary, saying that Mrs. Harding would like to have me receive with her on Saturday afternoon. Also the carbon copy of a note from Mrs. Harding to Mrs. Coolidge, saying that as the duties of the Cabinet ladies would be so very heavy this winter, it had occurred to her that it would lessen the burden of official visiting if they paid their calls upon the Senate ladies all at once, and that she was therefore inviting the hostesses of all senators to the White House at half-past four on the afternoon of the twenty-second. "I have lived in Washington twenty years, and this is the most gracious thing I have ever known a President's wife to do," the wife of a prominent Democratic senator who invited me to go with her that afternoon said to me as we motored down Sixteenth Street; and though I have not, of course, been here long enough to be able to make comparisons, I certainly cannot imagine how anything could be more thoughtful and gracious. But, since thoughtfulness and graciousness seem to be as natural to Mrs. Harding as fragrance to a flower, I was not at all surprised that she did it!

The party began even before we got inside the front door, for of course every one arrives at the White House on the very tick of the hour at which they are invited, and file of motors, coming up at the same time, stretched the entire length of the driveway, and out to Pennsylvania Avenue. Mrs. Gudger, the daughter of Senator Walsh of Montana, came in directly behind 130 us, the head of her dear little baby, framed in a frilly pink bonnet, just peeping out above the motor-robe. And we all began to visit together as we walked across the porch and into the big hall where we left our wraps. Mrs. Coolidge was standing at the door of the famous East Room, beautifully decorated with autumn leaves and palms and ferns, to receive us, dressed in pale gray, and then we formed an immense circle—exactly as if we were children getting ready to play "Drop the handkerchief," or "Ring around a-rosy"!—about sixty of us in all—and I never felt prouder in my life to be one of

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a big group of women, for honestly, Bertha, I believe that, no matter what state a woman came from, if she could have looked in there that day she would have felt that she was being worthily represented at Washington in the person of her senator's wife! Presently Mrs. Harding, in soft, dark blue with a big pink rose at her girdle, came in, and we each went up and spoke to her, resuming our places in the circle afterwards. Next the wives of the Cabinet members who are already in Washington—Mrs. Hughes, Mrs. Weeks, Mrs. Denby, Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Hoover and Mrs. Davis, each escorted by an aide, came into the room, greeted Mrs. Harding, and then went around the circle, shaking hands and chatting for a minute with every senator's wife present. After this ceremony was over, the “ranks broke” and we went out informally to the dining room, which is paneled in dark wood to the ceiling, and hung with beautiful, priceless, tapestries. First Mrs. Warren and Mrs. Culberson, later Mrs. Smoot and Mrs. McCumber—the 131 women whose husbands have had the longest terms in the Senate—presided at the tea table, in the center of which stood an enormous basketful of pink roses surrounded by pink candles with pink shades under silver filigree. There were beautiful silver services at either end of the table, of course, and the sandwiches and cinnamon toast and cakes and candies were passed about by the same aides who had escorted the Cabinet ladies, while the tea and coffee were served in delicate white and gold cups—fragile white china with broad gold bands and gold crests. And if you think for one minute that there was anything the least bit stiff or constrained about this gathering, you are very much mistaken! It is still so early in the season that this was the first time many of us had met this year, and we formed in little groups, greeting and welcoming each other, and then pausing to discuss the plans and events of this wonderful winter which lies before us. It was so very friendly and intimate, that I think we were all sorry, for more reasons than one, when at six o'clock Mrs. Harding came and shook hands with us all again, with some merry little personal greeting for each one of us, and went upstairs—the signal for our departure. And, still visiting together, the Ladies of the Senate went out on to the porch together and *kept on visiting* until our motors came up and carried us all away.

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And now I am *unpacked* for good, this time, I hope, delightful as all my trips have been, and am celebrating something quite different—the publication of my new novel, *The Career of David Noble*. You girls keep 132 complaining that I don't say much to you about my writing. My dear, I can't—it's the one thing that I'm shy about still. But I hope you'll read and like the little story, which, if it does nothing else, will at least tell every one who reads it how dear the Connecticut Valley is to me!

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

133

Washington, D. C. Thanksgiving Day.

Dear Alice,

I know only too well, and from personal experience, how difficult a woman who has spent all her winters in a big city finds it to adjust herself happily and usefully to a long, cold, uneventful winter in rural New England. It is harder for her—much harder—than for the woman who has lived the year round in the country all her life. So your letter struck a very responsive chord in my breast. “Here everything moves with its usual monotony,” you write, “one has to create interests, or rust out. I ride a little, I walk a little, I read a lot, and am trying to do my duty on the local school board by getting in touch with the children. Do write to me. I am jealous of all your other friends.”

Well, my dear, you shall certainly have your letter, and I hope you will think it is worth waiting for, since I have literally been having “the time of my life” this last month. Did you ever, as a little girl, stand turning a kaleidoscope marveling at the beautiful symmetrical designs which succeeded each other as rapidly as you could move your hand, and calling the other members of the family to share the gorgeous pictures with you? I have constantly been reminded of that feeling lately, for Washington has been truly kaleidoscopic 134 in its variety and beauty, and I will try to share some of these wonders with you.

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The first picture is deep purple, I think—the purple which is the color of mourning, and yet of royalty as well, and so much more poignantly suggestive of noble grief than black: the rotunda of the Capitol on the night of the tenth of November. The afternoon before the body of the Unknown Soldier, escorted by a military guard of honor, had been brought there upon the arrival of the battleship *Olympia*, and placed upon the catafalque where the bodies of Lincoln, Garfield, and McKinley rested. In the evening, President and Mrs. Harding, Vice President Coolidge, and Speaker Gillett—representing the House and the Senate—and the Secretary of War, had laid the first wreaths upon the flag-covered casket, while the guard of five soldiers had begun their silent vigil around it. Early the next morning, the public—already waiting in a line more than two blocks long, and as broad as the sidewalk—was admitted, allowed to pass into the Capitol through the central entrance, through the rotunda, without stopping, and out by a side door. Dawn was breaking on Armistice Day before the last of the one hundred thousand men, women, and children who made up that vast throng of mourners had gone; for no one was denied admittance. Meanwhile, from nine in the morning until ten at night, different organizations to which a permit had been previously given by the War Department were allowed, one after the other, to meet at the Senate entrance at a specified time, proceed to the rotunda with a military escort, and remain for ten minutes beside the casket holding appropriate 135 exercises and laying wreaths at its base. The wreaths were then removed to the side of the chamber by attendants in order to make room for the next ones to be placed there.

It was half-past nine in the evening when the turn of the League of American Penwomen came—a distinguished gathering of writers from all over the country, with three of the four women on the Advisory Board of the Peace Conference among our number, and present with us that night. I felt a greater sense of dedication to my work than ever before as, with Mrs. Du Puy, the national president, and Angela Morgan, the poet, I walked at their head as national vice president, behind the military escort, into the dim, silent room where the Unknown Soldier lay. The only light in the rotunda came from a circle of concealed globes high in the dome, and fell, like a shaft of light from heaven, full upon the casket. The rest

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of the chamber was dusky, like a river at twilight. We could barely see the great crowds passing through on the other side of the slim cordon which separated us from them, or the magnificent wreaths of flowers, heavy with fragrance, which, by this time, went twice around the rotunda. There was something of the stillness of a great, deep-running river about it all, too—even the feet of the multitude seemed, miraculously, to make no sound on the marble pavement. I heard countless persons speak of the strangeness of this fact—and there was not a whisper, not a cough, not a sigh. The heads of the five soldiers standing about the bier were bowed, as if in prayer. At its head stood the golden figure of Victory, wide-winged, bearing the

Invitation to the Burial of the Unknown Soldier on Armistice Day.

137 palm and sickle in one hand, the other hand uplifted—the gift of China; at its foot, a black velvet cushion with medals pinned upon it. Silently we laid down our wreaths while Angela Morgan, looking like some inspired angelic being, the folds of her white satin dress falling about her like the drapery of a statue, her beautiful pale face uplifted in the one shaft of light, recited her poem,

To the Unknown Soldier

He is known to the sunwhite Majesties, Who stand at the gates of dawn, He is known to the cloud-borne company Whose souls but late have gone. Like wind-flung stars through lattice bars They throng to greet their own; With voice of flame they sound his name Who died to us unknown. . . .

Oh, strange how the ground with never a sound, Swings open, tier on tier, And standing there in the shining air Are the friends he cherished here . . . . Like blossoms blown their souls have flown Past war and reeking sod; In the book unbound their names are found— They are *known* in the courts of God!

The next picture is white—the dazzling white of pearls, and snow, and lilies—the white of the marble of the memorial amphitheater at Arlington where the scene was enacted. The

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ceremonies attending the burial of the Unknown Dead were on the morning of November 11—Armistice Day. There was a faint haze, like a gray veil, over the usual “Harding blue” of the skies early that morning, but it fluttered away, 138 and when I took my seat in the immense structure, which holds five thousand people, the sun was shining brightly. It fell on the wreaths of flowers and laurel, given by every state in the Union, each exactly alike—except for the different state coat of arms which formed their centers—and each containing a leaf of solid gold, which, looped together with long ropes of laurel, were fastened at the tops of the tall fluted columns that surround the amphitheater; on the still more gorgeous wreaths which decorated the boxes occupied by the members of the Supreme Court, the Diplomatic Corps, and the Cabinet; and on the great mass of wreaths, moved out from the rotunda, and grouped together in an enormous bank at the foot of the stage. The sun shone, too, on the white vestments of the choir of forty-two men, preceded by buglers, as it advanced through the west entrance around the right colonnade, to the apse, singing my favorite hymn, “The Son of God goes forth to war.” As the last two lines rang out, Oh, God, to us may grace be given To follow in their train, the casket was placed by its body bearers on the catafalque above the mound of flowers, with its escort of choir and clergy, pallbearers, General Pershing, and other distinguished officers of the army and navy standing about it. And finally, the sun shone too, full on the face of President Harding—in the almost uncanny way that it always seems to do—as at ten minutes of twelve he took his place with Mrs. Harding and Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge on the stage behind the bier.

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Standing, the vast audience sang the “Star-Spangled Banner,” and listened to Chaplain Axton's invocation. Then, just before the stroke of twelve, the trumpet call “To Attention” sounded three times. We bowed our heads for the two minutes' silence—a silence so profound that somehow the realization that not only the group gathered there, but the entire nation, was sharing in it, was not only overwhelming—but easy. At the end of it, we

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sang “America,” and then Mr. Weeks, the Secretary of War, took his place in the rostrum and was presented to us as the Speaker of the Day.

“We are gathered,” he said, “not to mourn the passing of a great general, but an unknown soldier of the republic, who fought to sustain a great cause, for which he gave his life. Whether he came from the north, the south, the east or the west, we do not know; . . . we *do* know that he was a typical American who responded to his country's call, and that he now sleeps with the heroes.

“We, who are gathered here in such numbers, are simply representative of all the people of the United States who are here in spirit, and whose sentiments have been more stirred by this event than by any in the life of our country. These sentiments can only be adequately expressed by one citizen—the President of the United States.”

The President's speech I suppose you have read, but I want you to go over again the parts that impressed me most.

“Sleeping in these hallowed grounds are thousands of Americans who have given their blood for the 140 baptism of freedom. . . . Burial here is rather more than a sign of the Government's favor, it is a suggestion of a tomb in the heart of the nation, sorrowing for its noble dead.

“Ours are lofty resolutions to-day, as with tribute to the dead we consecrate ourselves to a better order for the living. With all my heart, I wish we might say to the defenders who survive, to mothers who sorrow, to widows and children who mourn, that no such sacrifice shall ever be asked again. . . .

“Standing here to-day on hallowed ground, conscious that all America has halted to share in the tribute of heart and mind and soul to this fellow American, . . . I can sense the prayers of our people, of all peoples, that this Armistice Day shall mark the beginning of



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a new and lasting era of peace on earth, good will toward men. Let me join in that prayer. 'Our Father who art in Heaven' . . ."

When the President finished his speech, the flag concealing the casket was partially turned back, and on the plain black covering underneath he pinned the Congressional Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross; and after that, General Jacques, representing Belgium, Admiral Beatty, representing Great Britain, Marshal Foch, representing France, General Diaz, representing Italy, Prince Bibesco, representing Roumania, Dr. Stepanek, representing Czechoslovakia, and Prince Lubomirski, representing Poland, placed beside these the military decorations awarded by their respective countries for highest valor. As they did this all except Admiral Beatty made little speeches, very touching and beautiful. But this great man saluted in absolute silence, and silently laid beside the Victoria Cross a sheaf of palms and Easter lilies—the insignia of victory and resurrection. Up to that time, I had been deeply and profoundly impressed, but I had been conscious of no thrill of either poignant grief or supreme exaltation. But, as the symbolism of that tribute came over me, the wonderful voice of Rosa Ponselle, a soprano from the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, swept across the amphitheater with the message, "I know that my Redeemer liveth"—vital, glorious, magnificent—and through the tears that rolled down my cheeks I saw that there was not a dry face in the multitude around me. When the wonderful song was over, and the chaplain began to read the Scripture lesson—"I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "In my Father's House are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you"—I knew that those words would have a greater meaning to me all my life than they ever had before, a meaning that would last always.

At the end of the Scripture reading, the casket of the Unknown Soldier was lifted from the catafalque and borne from the apse through the southeastern entrance to the white sarcophagus, erected just outside, at the foot of the flight of white steps leading into the amphitheater. It was preceded by the clergy, and followed by the President and Mrs. Harding, the Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge, the senior foreign delegates to the

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conference, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, the foreign officers who had presented decorations, General 142 Pershing, the members of the Supreme Court, other members of the Cabinet and the Diplomatic Corps, the members of Congress and their wives. All about us, in the cemetery, stood the crowds who had not had tickets to the amphitheater, but who had been admitted to the grounds, and so had been able to be present, at least to a degree, at the great ceremonial—thousands and thousands of them, standing on the wooded slopes and beautiful open spaces of Arlington, as far as the eye could see. At the foot of the hill, beyond the fields, gray and brown in their peaceful November coloring, stretched the broad river; across it towered the city of Washington, its three great landmarks fully revealed—the pillars of the Lincoln Memorial, the shaft of the Washington Monument, the dome of the Capitol—all rising dazzling white, like driven snow against a sky of celestial blue. “I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me,” read the chaplain, “Write: ‘From henceforth blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.’” Wreaths in behalf of all the men in service, of the American war mothers, of the British war mothers were placed on the tomb; Chief Plenty Coos, representing the Indians of the United States, laid his coup stick and war bonnet of brilliant feathers beside the fragrant flowers; three salvos of artillery rang out, thundering and echoing through the still air.

And then came “Taps.” . . .

The next picture is green, the green of springtime, of new ideas and fresh hopes, of seeds planted in dull earth suddenly shooting up as vigorous young plants 143 which are later on to feed hungry bodies and restore broken spirits: the picture of the opening session of the Conference on Limitation of Armaments. I am sure that the heart of every Daughter of the American Revolution in the country has beaten high with joy and pride at the thought that Continental Hall, the home of her organization, was chosen for this meeting. The flags of the thirteen original states hung, as always, high over the stage; but, in addition to these, over the middle of the ceiling hung a pole on which the flags of the nine nations represented at the conference were arranged in a circle. On the stage itself, against a

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background of huge palms, they stood in two groups—those of the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan together—the five plenipotentiary powers invited to participate in a conference on the subject of limitation of armament, in connection with which Pacific and Far Eastern questions would also be discussed; and those of Belgium, China, the Netherlands and Portugal together—the five nations invited with the approval of the plenipotentiary powers to participate in the discussion of Pacific and Far Eastern questions on account of their interests in that part of the world. On the stage, crowding it from end to end, sat the advisory committee appointed by the President—among them, in the front row, the four women who are members (Mrs. Egan, Mrs. Edson, Mrs. Bird and Mrs. Winter), General Pershing, Admiral Coontz, Theodore Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy; in the four boxes over the stage sat Mrs. Harding, Mrs. Coolidge, Madame Jusserand, Lady Geddes, Mrs. Wellington Koo, and other prominent 144 women whose husbands are vitally concerned in the conference; the center gallery was allotted to members of the Senate; the right gallery to members of the House—each man “checked up” as he went in, for there was no “transferring of privileges” allowed on this great day; the left gallery was given over to members of the Supreme Court, the Cabinet, and the Diplomatic Corps; and, on the floor, separated only by a narrow cord from the green baize tables, which formed a huge open square, at which sat the delegates, were the “accredited writers” for the conference, authors and journalists from all over the world—and that was where *I* was sitting, so exalted and excited to think I had been one of the very few women admitted among that number, that I hardly knew what to do.

The exercises opened with a short prayer, and then President Harding came forward and made the brief address of welcome.

“It is a great and happy privilege,” he said, “to bid the delegates to this conference a cordial welcome to the Capital of the United States of America. . . . This is not a convention of remorse, nor a session of sorrow. It is not a conference of victors to define terms of settlement. . . . It is rather a coming together from all parts of the earth, to apply the better attributes of mankind to minimize the faults of our international relationships. . . .

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I think I may say the call is not one of the United States alone, it is rather the spoken word of a war-wearied world, struggling for restoration. . . . I can speak officially only for the United States. *One hundred millions frankly want less of armament, and none of war.* ”

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When he had finished speaking, the President left the conference amidst what my brethren of the daily press love to call “tumultuous applause,” and with no exaggeration in this case, you may be sure. And then, Mr. Hughes having risen to suggest that the formal organization of the conference should next take place, Mr. Balfour, in a most gracious and graceful speech—during the course of which he tactfully pointed out that at gatherings of this sort “the inviting nation always provides the chairman”—moved that Mr. Hughes should be appointed to that office. There was nothing, of course, surprising about this. It was not only fully expected—it was prearranged. But Mr. Hughes, once on his feet, speedily made up for any lack of excitement which his nomination had caused in the speech with which he accepted it. Resigned, as I have perforce become, to sitting in the Senate gallery for days on end, listening to speeches that sometimes last five hours at a stretch, only to be “continued in our next,” I fully expected to see the first day of the conference pass off with a somewhat florid exchange of congratulations and courtesies, an indefinite outline of possible future action, and the appointment of some minor committees. Mr. Hughes had not been speaking five minutes, however, before he had us all literally sitting on the edge of our chairs, our hair rising on end with excitement and surprise.

“It is proposed,” he announced emphatically, “that the conference should proceed *at once* to the question of the limitation of armament. . . . We can no longer content ourselves with investigations, with statistics, with reports, with the circumlocution of inquiry. The 146 essential facts are sufficiently known. The time has come, and this conference has been called, not for general resolutions or mutual advice, *but for action!* . . . I am happy to say that I am at liberty to go beyond general propositions, and, in behalf of the American

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delegation, acting under the instruction of the President of the United States, to submit to you a *concrete proposition* for the limitation of naval armament.”

After the suggestion and the approval of a few appointments, Mr. Hughes announced that a motion to adjourn was in order. But what is sometimes known as the “sommolent Senate” belied its title that day, and, from its unaccustomed place in the gallery, began to call loudly, “Briand! Briand! Briand!” There was nothing to do but to postpone adjournment, and allow the great Frenchman—a wonderful orator, with a voice that is mellow in its richness—to respond. I never was so glad in my life—in spite of my admiration for M. Camelynck, the official interpreter—that I understood French! When M. Briand had finished, the Senate roared “Kato! Kato!” and so on, until a representative from every one of the nine nations had replied to the call. The great audience finally poured out of Continental Hall in a torrent of enthusiasm. And, at the two sessions which have taken place since, there has been no lessening of this enthusiasm. A vital force, charged like an electric current, has, I believe, been released in Washington during these last days, which will surge around the world. “*The time has come for action*”—and action is going to take place.

Now I must show you a blue picture, the blue that 147 the old Italian masters used when they painted the Madonna's robes—the House of Representatives on the eighteenth and nineteenth of November. The appearance and the rules of the House are very different from those of the Senate. The members have no desks, and go from the long rows of seats—which look very much like the folding seats used in concert halls—to the front of the room to make their speeches, which they deliver with a good deal of spirit, not to say action, instead of simply rising in their places to make them; and applause, strictly forbidden in the Senate both on the floor and in the galleries, is here not only tolerated, but encouraged. For two long, hard days, the House talked and argued and fought over the Sheppard-Towner Bill—that measure for the protection of maternity and infancy for which, as you know, I have worked so long, and tried so hard to help. Seldom, I believe, has a more spirited combat taken place in the turbulent body. But, at the end of the second

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day, there was a call for the “ayes and nays.” And the vote was two hundred and seventy-nine to thirty-nine *in favor of the bill*, a proportion equal to that in the Senate vote last July. A few minor—and unharmed—changes necessitated the return of the measure to the Senate; but there it was promptly accepted without even being sent to a conference. That battle is over—and it is won. It seems to me infinitely fitting that in the same month that the United States has taken its stand before the world in favor of “peace on earth, good will towards men,” its highest legislative body, before the adjournment of its extra session, has decreed that, among mothers and babies, no less 148 than among soldiers, needless suffering and needless death shall cease.

And finally imagine a picture in which all these wonderful colors are blended—the great “arch of jewels” hung like a necklace, with the coats of arms of the nine nations of the conference as a “sunburst” in the center, between two tall white obelisks, also studded with gems, erected near the Pan-American building and illuminated on the nights of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth of November. The Marine Band played, the President turned the switch which released the search-lights—long shafts of radiance, ruby, golden, emerald, amethyst, playing from every direction upon the thirty-seven thousand Novagem jewels that were used in the construction of this arch of glory, this dazzling portal of brilliance. May it not be, I wondered as I looked at it, the symbol of the gateway of light through which we are walking to higher things?

Much love, dear Alice, as ever.

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. Dec. 19.

Dear Margery,

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You are entirely right. I *should* be “the most ungrateful wretch alive” if I did not realize, with something akin to thanksgiving, the wonderful opportunity I am having in Washington this winter and find inspiration as well as gratification in my association with famous persons from all over the world. But even more thrilling than any purely personal pleasures has been the sense of taking a tiny part in a great drama of events in which there have been many “star” actors; and since there is nothing on earth so delightful as sharing with the friends we love the good things we have ourselves, I would like to make a “composite day” for you out of some of these events, choosing the most interesting and vital thing that I have done in the morning, then in the afternoon, and finally in the evening, and have you pretend, if you can, that you are coming with me while I do them.

So, first of all, we will go to the Fourth Session of the Conference—the most important of them all, so far, because definite and concrete decisions were made at it. You have seen, I suppose, the diagrams printed in all the big newspapers showing how the delegates are seated; but I wish you could catch some of their personality as well. Mr. Hughes is a perfect presiding 150 officer, dignified yet never stiff, with a tremendous amount of *savoir faire* and facility of speech, and the courtliness of manner that we always think of belonging to “gentlemen of the old school.” At his left is Mr. Balfour, a good deal of fresh, wholesome boyishness still left in his fine face, who speaks—as do Briand and Viviani—entirely without notes, hesitating sometimes in his choice of words but never in his flow of ideas and his knowledge of events—and grasping the lapels of his coat while he talks. On Mr. Hughes's right is Senator Lodge, the most finished scholar in American political life to-day, and beyond Mr. Root, Senator Underwood, silent, smiling, infinitely capable. On the left side of the table you would especially notice the noble face and figure of Srinivasa Sastri, the representative of India, dressed in a gray costume that is rather clerical in its appearance, his head covered with a snowy turban; and Senator Schanzer of Italy beside him, with a sensitive, delicate, bearded face startlingly like those shown in religious pictures, and a fluent, graceful command of several languages. While at the foot of the table you would wish to look oftenest, I think, at Dr. Wellington Koo of the Chinese

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delegation, former minister to this country and present envoy to Great Britain, young, brilliant, compelling—whose lovely little wife, by the way, is quite the most beautiful oriental woman I have ever seen, and is always present at the Sessions, beautifully dressed, and seated in one of the boxes over the stage.

The Fourth Session was opened with a speech by Mr. Hughes in which he stated that “most satisfactory progress had been made by the committee of the whole 151 on the Far East question.” “The first subject considered was China,” he went on, and then read the “Root Four Points” drawn up at the request of the committee by Mr. Root, which constitute, as the Secretary of State put it, “a charter containing an assurance to China of protection from acts in derogation of her rights to integrity,” and is also a “binding agreement for further guidance of the powers.” The resolutions were explained, separately and in detail, and the formal assent to them by the powers represented at the conference was asked for and given by each one separately. Then the chairman announced that he would ask Mr. Lodge to make a communication to the conference which . . . “should be known at this first opportunity”—the already famous “Four-Power Pact” as the new ten-year treaty between the United States, England, France, and Japan in regard to the Islands of the Pacific, is called.

“This treaty is both brief and simple,” Senator Lodge announced before he read it, and indeed, though I am not, of course, an authority on the subject, I doubt whether any document likely to be so far-reaching in its consequences has ever been written which is so brief and simple. But I hope that this fact, coupled with the comfortable feeling which I have heard several persons express, that “those islands are a long way off, and not worth fighting over anyway,” has not led you—or rather *mised* you—into underestimating its importance. In the first place, no great radical change can be made in international relationships—or in anything else—“at one fell swoop”; it must come about gradually, a step at a time, if it is 152 to be successful, exactly as a child must learn to read its primer long before it can cope with a Latin grammar; nevertheless it *is* “the first step that counts.” And this agreement is, without question, the *first definite step* towards eventual world-



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wide disarmament. In the second place it brings to an end, almost automatically, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance which has been regarded by many as a very serious menace to the unity of the English-speaking races. So this "brief and simple paper" which forms the "Four-Power Pact" is likely, in my estimation, to go down in history with the Magna Charta and the Declaration of Independence in importance; and it was presented to us that morning with a speech which was, as Mr. Balfour said in replying to it afterwards, "admirable in its clarity, and perfect in its literary form."

"The surest way to prevent war is to remove the causes of war. This is an attempt to remove causes of war over a great area of the world's surface by reliance upon the good faith and honest intentions of the nations which sign the treaty, solving all difficulties through the processes of diplomacy and joint consideration and conciliation.

"The islands of the southwestern Pacific are . . . far more numerous than is generally realized. They are so dense that we might describe them in the words of Browning as Sprinkled isles, Lily on lily that o'erlace the sea.

"But they possess certain qualities other than natural beauty and romantic charm. The larger ones are rich 153 in many ways, fertile in the gifts of the soil and climate and in other forms of riches . . . which extend from the untold mineral resources of Australia to the pearls which are brought from the depths of the ocean. . . .

"Agreements of this sort have often been made before, I know, only to fail. But there has been a far-reaching change in the mental condition of men and women everywhere. That which really counts is the intention of the nations which make the agreement. In this hour of trial and darkness, which has followed the war with Germany, the spirit of the world is no longer the same. If we enter upon this agreement, which rests only upon the will and honor of those who sign it, we will at least make a great experiment and appeal to the men and women of the nations to help us sustain it in spirit and in truth."

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As was natural, the representatives of the other powers at the conference all made replies to this speech of Senator Lodge. Seldom, if ever, I believe, has a series of more eloquent and fitting speeches been delivered upon one occasion; but I think the laurels should go to the one made by Viviani for France, with its keynote, "France has nearer declined to stand by her plighted word," its poignant picture of his own country, and his clear exposition of the mental as well as the physical condition of Europe, which is so different from that of our own country.

"That, gentlemen," he said, after outlining again the terms of the Treaty, "is the juridical scope of the draft . . . but I think we should be failing to ourselves and to you, and especially to the very sumptuous hospitality which we have enjoyed in the United States, 154 if we did not try all together to emphasize the *great moral value* of what I call an historical date. . . .

"Senator Lodge referred to the Pacific regions as being far removed . . . and a wish was expressed that the will of peace should extend to other parts of the world. Ah, gentlemen, to whom could these words sound more welcome than to the French delegation? I say this thinking of all the suffering that we have had to go through, having in mind the mourning families, the dead who cover our soil, the *fifteen hundred thousand* tombs that are on such bare and barren ground that we wonder if spring will ever bring flowers enough to decorate these tombs. . . .

"Europe is an old country; it is a war-wearied world over which twenty centuries of fighting and struggle have passed. It has been steeped hundreds of times in blood and tears. . . . It is impossible to ask for tranquillity at once. You must have a little patience . . . it being understood . . . that these men, of whom I am one, here enter their solemn oath to establish peace among men, it being understood that peace shall prevail in the world when justice has been satisfied."

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“I wish I could impress upon you the significance of the fact,” one of the great writers here for the conference—an American, not a Frenchman!—said to me, “that when we build a war memorial it always takes the form of a triumphant, exultant youthful figure of victory. When the French build one, it is always a tragic figure of death—death in its most dreadful form.” I thought of that, very earnestly, as I listened to Viviani’s question, “Will spring ever bring 155 enough flowers to cover our tombs?”—and I want you to think of it, too, Margery, whenever you hear stupid or ignorant or wicked criticism of the attitude of the French at this conference.

The next treat in our “composite day” will be the luncheon at the Raleigh, attended by more than five hundred representative women, which the General Federation of Women’s Clubs and the District of Columbia Federation gave in honor of the four women on the Advisory Board of the conference—Mrs. Winter, Mrs. Egan, Mrs. Edson, and Mrs. Bird. It was held on Mrs. Winter’s birthday, since, as she is both president of the General Federation and member of the Board, she was what I think might be called an “extra special” guest of honor! She is a wonderfully fine speaker, and after being introduced by Mrs. Frizzell, the district president, who presided, and being presented by her with a beautiful bouquet of roses, she acted as toast mistress for the occasion, standing at the center of the “honor table” which ran the entire length of the great ballroom, dressed in pure white—a commanding, forceful and splendid figure. Lady Geddes and Lady Borden were there that day, representing the British delegates; Mrs. Hughes, Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Fall and Mrs. Davis, wives of our own Cabinet members; Madame Sze and Madame Hu Wang from China, Madame Saburi from Japan, Mademoiselle Botagne from France, and many others; and most of them spoke—bringing to the women of America special messages from their respective countries.

In the course of Mrs. Winter’s own remarks, she 156 made one which I considered extremely important. “I am not half so much afraid,” she said, “for the future of our country in the activity of the Bolsheviki as I am in the *inactivity* of intelligent women. We have come

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into power in the world when spiritual force is most needed, but half of us do not use our power." I see so much, Margery, of women who should, and

An Invitation to the British Embassy.

could, be the torchbearers of the world, and who are doing nothing, not even lifting the tiniest little candle, that I couldn't help hoping that every woman who heard Mrs. Winter that day would go out and at least *try* to start a small illumination!

The most interesting dinner this last month was, I think, the one which President and Mrs. Harding gave to the visiting governors of the different states 157 and their wives; the governors have been in conference at Charleston, and many of them stopped in Washington on their way home, so this occasion was planned for their especial benefit, and some of the ex-governors and their wives who are now in Washington in some new official capacity were invited in afterwards to meet them. Harry and I were fortunate enough to be included in this number, and enjoyed it tremendously—there is something very cordial and simple, as well as very dignified and fitting, about all the White House entertainments under the present administration, and I never saw Mrs. Harding look more charming than she did that night, wearing a beautiful dress of silver and violet brocade, and carrying a huge cherry-colored ostrich feather fan. About a hundred of us assembled in the famous East Room, renewing old acquaintances and making many pleasant new ones; and then a perfectly delightful program of monologues was given by Ruth Draper before the President and Mrs. Harding said good night to us all—with some special word of personal greeting for each one—and withdrew—did you know, Margery, that, at the White House, the host and hostess leave before the guests? It's a rather interesting custom!

And finally you must come with me to the great reception for the delegates at the British Embassy, for that has been one of the most brilliant of all the big official parties so far this season—"colorful" in the real sense of that much-abused word! Tall palms towered and waved on either side of the grand staircase in the large, dignified entrance hall of the

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Embassy, and at the head of this staircase the beautiful, 158 life-size portrait of Queen Victoria, which is one of the most imposing ornaments of the house, was exquisitely lighted and banked about the base with white chrysanthemums and soft green ferns, and near it an orchestra was playing; the mantel in the state dining room was covered with yellow chrysanthemums, and there were great clusters of them, too, between the silver-shaded lights on the long dining table. Just inside the doors of the double drawing-rooms, which were also decorated with palms, shining green and glossy against the rich brocade of the curtains, an aide in gorgeous uniform presented the guests to the receiving party: Sir Auckland and Lady Geddes, Mr. Balfour, and Lord and Lady Lee of Fareham—Lady Geddes dressed in hydrangea-colored velvet with crystal trimmings and a cloth of silver train, and wearing a diamond tiara and necklace, and Lady Lee in cloth of gold veiled with misty, gray tulle, and adorned with the most magnificent necklace of diamonds and rubies that I ever beheld. Beyond, in the ballroom, was gathered a throng, nearly two thousand strong, of famous men and women from all over the world, uniforms of khaki and navy blue mingling with those of azure and scarlet and gold lace, and nearly all glittering with medals, among the immaculate black and white of regulation evening dress, dresses of velvet and satin and lace—the most beautiful fabrics and exquisite shades, and such jewels as I never even imagined before. And back of it all something more splendid even than the glow of color and richness of gems—the wonderful feeling of good will, of being 159 part of a great world-family, of closely woven international understanding and happiness.

And now, it is after midnight, and we have crowded all we can, I think, into our “composite day.” So we must kick off our silver slippers, and unhook our party dresses, and, after “talking it all over” while we brush our hair and turn down our beds, kiss each other good night.

And so—good night, dear Margery.

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. January.

Dear Prue,

Your long, newsy, affectionate letter, so full of good tidings about yourself and the children, and the whole neighborhood, seemed to carry me for a few minutes straight home to the Connecticut Valley. I felt almost as if I could see the big dining room at "The Homestead" where we have had so many good times together—almost as if I could taste the good things you always gave me to eat—almost as if I could hear you urging me to stay all night because it was snowing too hard for me to undertake the three-mile sleigh-ride to Pine Grove Farm! Well—I may as well confess it nearly drove me to the Union Station to look up time-tables! But after a pretty stiff hour of homesickness, I am settling down to write to you in the hope that I can make you see Sixteenth Street—"The Avenue of the Presidents" as it is so often called—and all that is connected with it in Washington as plainly as you have made me see "The Homestead," with the result that *you* will begin to look up time-tables, and follow up your search in a way which I'm not free to do.

The New Year is always ushered in with a good deal of merrymaking here, and I certainly began it most delightfully, "assisting" at the beautiful reception 161 which Senator and Mrs. Key Pittman of Nevada, and the group of young British attaches who live next door to them gave on New Year's Day. The two houses, which are among the most attractive on upper Sixteenth Street, are so constructed that they can be thrown together, by a clever arrangement of doors on the stairway. The guests came in through the Pittman house, where Mrs. Pittman, one of the loveliest women in congressional circles, and looking unusually lovely that day in an exquisite gold-colored dress covered with black lace, received them in the big yellow drawing-room on the second floor; the refreshments were served in the Pittman house, too—the long table in the dining room an almost solid bank of magnificent pink roses, four tall, slim, pink candles rising in the center of the mound, with merely a little rim of the tablecloth showing at the edge, wide enough to set the silver

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service for tea and coffee at either end, and the silver dishes piled with dainty sandwiches and cakes and ices along the sides. There was a group of very distinguished women for pourers—Madame le Breton, the wife of the Argentine Ambassador, Madame Grouitch, wife of the Serbian Minister, and Mrs. Kendrick, wife of the senator from Wyoming, among them, and a number of charming young girls, reminding me of a nosegay of flowers in their soft, bright-colored dresses, drifted about making themselves generally useful—and ornamental!—though, as was hardly strange, the direction in which they seemed to drift most frequently was towards that magic opening on the stairway into the attachés' house, where the dancing was going on. And, after this party was over, 162 nearly all of us went on to the one which the Prince de Béarn, the councilor of the French Embassy, was giving, literally keeping “open house” to all his friends, a house gay with poinsetta blossoms and a great tree glowing with multi-colored electric lights, where the traditional New Year's “eggnog” was being served, and where the very atmosphere seemed permeated with joyous hospitality and good cheer.

In spite of these festivities, I was up bright and early the next morning to go to the New Year's reception at the White House; and I would honestly rather have sat up all night than to have run the slightest risk of being one minute late to it, for it began the New Year for me in a way I shall never forget. The square hall directly inside of the North Door was completely filled by the Marine Band, gorgeous in full-dress uniforms of scarlet and gold and blue, only a narrow passageway in the center being left for the guests to pass through; and standing in front of the two beautiful white pillars which form the entrance to the long, narrow corridor beyond this hall stood two marines, also in magnificent regalia, each holding an immense silk American flag, surmounted by a golden eagle; while on either side of the wide staircase of gray stone, with pink rosebushes and ferns of delicate green edging every one of its broad, low steps, two more aides with flags were stationed—the American flag and the presidential flag. The East Room had no decorations but autumn leaves and palms, and, indeed, its stately dignity, relieved by the scintillating light of its famous crystal chandeliers, is actually more imposing without anything to detract from its

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beautiful proportions and 163 splendid space. In the state dining room, on the west side of the house, the table had been removed, and the thick green carpet looked like a velvety, brilliant lawn, and the mantel and fireplace were completely hidden by a bank of ferns and palms, starred with poinsetta blossoms. The Green Room and the Red Room, which open, respectively, into the East Room and the dining room, each contain a long, old-fashioned mirror which runs from floor to ceiling between two tall windows; and against these mirrors were placed soft, slender sprays of pink roses, pink carnations, and bronze-colored oak-leaves, reflected, of course, in the glass behind them; and in the Blue Room—between the Green Room and the Red Room—where the receiving party stood, was grouped an array of huge old-fashioned nosegays, surrounded by lacy paper frills.

Promptly at eleven o'clock the massive iron gates at the foot of the staircase were flung open, the Marine Band burst forth with "Hail to the Chief"—a bugle call rang out—and President and Mrs. Harding, followed by the Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge, and the members of the Cabinet with their wives, and escorted by the presidential aides, came down the staircase and passed through the corridor into the Blue Room. The foot of the stairs is directly beside one of the doors into the East Room, where I was standing, and that procession of men and women, the leaders of the nation to-day, going through an opened gate to the sound of music into a room fragrant and beautiful with flowers to welcome the representatives of this, and every other, great country in the world, seemed to me the living symbol of all that the New 164 Year should stand for to you, and me, and every woman in America.

The Diplomatic Corps were received first, headed by their dean, the French Ambassador, and with them their wives and the delegates to the conference, men and women of many nations, and not only men and women, but some boys and girls, too, among them two lovely little Chinese girls, the daughters of the supreme adviser of the Chinese delegation, in native costumes of exquisite, dull-blue brocade, which contrasted oddly with their neat, shiny, and very American, little patentleather shoes. The Right Honorable Arthur Balfour, in full court dress, so different in appearance than at the sessions of the conference that



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I hardly recognized him at first; Sir Robert Borden, the Premier of Canada, whom I had had the pleasure of chatting with and the honor of guiding through the magic staircase at the Pittmans' the day before, gorgeous in gold braid and blue uniform; sashes and stripes, medals and swords, spurs and service bars and medals of honor flashed and gleamed on every side. After the Diplomatic Corps came the Supreme Court, headed of course by the Chief Justice, very genial and smiling, with Mrs. Taft—guests in the house where they were once such gracious hosts; then came the judges and justices of other high courts, the district commissioners, the members of Congress, the superior officers of the Army and Navy and Marine Corps. And, after the official greetings had taken place, there was a great deal of *unofficial* handshaking and welcoming of each other among the guests in the East Room, until a little before one o'clock, when we went away.

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Only twelve days had elapsed after the New Year's morning reception before the great evening reception in honor of the Diplomatic Corps was given at the White House—the most brilliant and exclusive and important social event of the year on the official calendar.

Invitation to the Diplomatic Reception at the White House.

It was a marvelous, starry, shining night, with the rare, light snow which we so seldom get in Washington powdering the ground, so that the effect of the long double row of globes of electric lights running all the way from the White House to the Executive Offices, both east and west, was doubly lovely; and 166 though the occasion—to me at least—lacked something which I cannot quite define of the impressive symbolism of the one on New Year's Day, as a spectacle this reception was of course even more glowing and gorgeous than that, because there were so many more women present at it, and Mrs. Harding looked like a vision from fairyland in white velvet and diamonds. The dresses this year have been very beautiful, elegant in the real sense of that much-abused word—glorious red velvets, pure white satins with pearl garniture, tissues of gold and silver, brocades in blue and purple—these are the colors that “have been much worn”! And with them bands of jewels or glittering leaves or high scintillating cobs for headdresses, necklaces

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and tiaras and brooches and bracelets that I wouldn't dare to try to describe, and huge ostrich-feather fans, usually contrasting in color with the gowns. I defy any woman, even if she were over ninety and half blind, and homely as a hedge fence, not to rejoice in the splendor of the clothes in Washington this winter.

“Have you done anything this last month,” I can imagine Prue saying to herself about now, “except to go to receptions?” Yes, indeed, my dear. Lots of things! I have been to several plays and concerts and to the wonderfully interesting military drills at Fort Myer, where all sorts of the most daring “stunts” were performed. I have been to a few balls, and a number of dinners, and to a great many luncheons. One of these was given in honor of Lord and Lady Lee, who have been among the most fêted of the delegates to the conference—at which the twenty-six guests were all seated at one immense round table, wonderfully lighted by electricity hidden under globes of crimson silk. It was the most representative group of men and women who are thinking and working and acting in a way which is having a very far-reaching influence, with whom I have ever been so intimately placed: Srinivasa Sastri, the delegate to the conference from India; the Polish Minister and Princess Lubomirska; the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Mellon; the Secretary of Agriculture and Mrs. Wallace; Senator and Mrs. Owen; Senator and Mrs. Harris; Prince Radziwill; the military attaché to the Italian Embassy, the Marquis di Bernezzo and the Marquisa—don't the mere names suggest to you the variety of interest and influence, the stimulating quality of the conversation, at such a gathering? And our hostess on this occasion, the widow of a former senator from Missouri, is one of the most remarkable persons I have ever known—a painter and writer of no little ability, a moving spirit, and, I may add, a *tireless worker* for every kind of civic improvement and embellishment, a champion—in the days when it was far from fashionable to be so—for sanity in diet and exercise, for prohibition and woman's suffrage—a political power and a force for freedom. If every rich and influential society woman had done what she has done, Prue, society would be a very different organization!

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But, before I say good-by, I want to tell you about two events which were not parties, though I regard them as the most significant and important of the month: The National Agricultural Conference, and the unveiling of the Jeanne d'Arc statue. As the daughter of a long line of "dirt farmers," the wife of one, and 168 the sister of two, I am sure that the calling together of four hundred and fifty delegates, twenty-six of them women, to confer at the Capital on the grave agricultural crisis which confronts this country has had a special interest to you. But it ought to have a special interest to *all* American women. "This is the first time," as Mr. James Morton of Georgia put it in his speech before the convention, "that the 'powers that be' have thought enough of the real farmers to invite them to Washington in an intimate way." "Never before," said Secretary Wallace in beginning his address, "has there been brought together at one time a group of men and women who so completely represent the agricultural life of the country"—and he had good reason to say this for more than two thirds of the delegates are actually engaged in farming at the present time. The keynote of the event, however, was sounded in another sentence of the Secretary's speech—" *The agricultural life of the nation is in a bad way, and our entire business and industrial life is suffering in consequence.*" The wife of the small-town merchant, the daughter of the city banker, the woman whose profession is bookkeeping or singing or acting, is going to be exactly as much affected by what she comfortably calls a "rural situation" as the one who lives on a farm, and that is why it was necessary to have some representatives of "affiliated industries" at the conference, too.

The meetings were held in the large ballroom of the Willard Hotel, and I found all the sessions, at which Mr. Sydney Anderson, Congressman from Minnesota, and Chairman of the Congressional Joint Commission 169 of Agricultural Industry, acted as chairman, extremely interesting; but I think perhaps the speeches made on the opening day gave me a little more food for thought than any others. The President opened the conference; and I want to bring before you some of the "high-lights" in his speech that shone very brightly for me:

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“Concerning the grim reality of the present crisis in agriculture there can be no difference of opinion among informed people. We can have no helpful understanding by assuming that agriculture suffers alone, but we must fairly recognize the fundamental difficulties which accentuate the agricultural discouragements. . . . Agriculture is the oldest and most elemental of industries. Every other industry is intimately related to and largely dependent upon it. . . . The farmer who owns his farm is capitalist, executive, and laborer all in one. As capitalist, he earns the smaller return on his investment. As executive, he is little paid; and as laborer he is greatly underpaid in comparison to labor in other occupations. *There must be a new conception of the farmer's place in our social and economic scheme.* The time is long past when we may think of farming as an occupation fitting for the man who is not equipped for, or who has somehow failed, at some other line of endeavor. He must be a good deal of an engineer; . . . he requires the practical knowledge of a trained mechanic; . . . he has need of a working knowledge of chemistry—above all, he must have untiring energy and a real love and enthusiasm for his splendid profession. For such I choose to call the vocation of the farmer the most useful, 170 and—it ought to be made—the most attractive along all lines of human effort.”

Following the speeches made by the President, the Secretary of Agriculture, and Congressman Anderson, addresses were delivered “on the present agricultural situation and suggested remedies” by delegates from five great regions—the northeastern states, the cotton belt, the corn belt, the wheat regions, and the ranch country. They were very illuminating, and at times very touching and inspiring, and they all showed great earnestness of feeling, and intelligent understanding. When Mr. Cornwell of Vermont said, “The farmer works long hours to make a living. His income is too small to enable him to have a stenographer or bookkeeper. When he comes in at night after long physical labor outdoors he is too sleepy to think or figure. Just keep this in mind in figuring out farm problems,” I thought of how many times I have seen just this situation at home. When Mr. Sykes of Kansas said that eleven hundred farm homes had been closed in his region in *two months* I thought of the dozens and dozens of signs “for sale” that I had seen

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motoring across Near Hampshire last summer; and I did not need the facts presented in a speech the following day of how the falling off of a demand for certain farm commodities in Georgia had caused the closing of a chemical factory in Colorado, of how a failure in Texas had wrought havoc in Maine, to make me realize that the problem is a national one, to understand the plea that the men from *all* these different regions made for better organization, and more 171 real coöperation, for longer credit and a greater chance for development.

I confess that I left the conference feeling rather sober—wishing I could make other women feel sober, too! But the day closed on a joyful note, after all, for, in the evening, President and Mrs. Harding gave one of their wonderful parties at the White House for the delegates and their wives, inviting also the members of the agricultural committee in Congress and their wives. I never went to a more delightful reception there, for we all received the never-failing cordial, kindly welcome that the Chief Executive and his wife give to all their guests, and the Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge, the Secretary of State, Mrs. Fall, the wife of the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of the Navy and Mrs. Denby, the Secretary of Agriculture and Mrs. Wallace assisted them in receiving; the beautiful rooms were all splendidly decorated, the Marine Band was playing and a delicious buffet supper—chicken salad and rolls and sandwiches and coffee, fresh strawberry ice cream and spicy fruit cake—were served in the state dining room on a long table lovely with pink carnations in great silver bowls, and tall white candles shining in silver candelabra.

As to the other great event of the month, it was, of course, very different, but very inspiring too—the ceremony of the unveiling of the bronze statue of Jeanne d'Arc in Meridian Park on the five-hundred-and-tenth anniversary of the birth of that simple little peasant girl of Domrémy, who, through her courage and her faith, crowned a king and saved a country. This statue is an exact replica of the one by Paul 172 Dubois, which stands in front of the Rheims cathedral, and has been presented through the “Lyceum,” a society of French women in New York founded with the purpose of bringing about a better understanding

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between French and American women, by the women of France to the women of America. The position which has been chosen for it is, in my opinion, the finest in the Capital, at the top of a hill overlooking the whole city towards the Potomac, and though there are of course many statues to famous men of other countries erected here, this is the first one to be put up in honor of a woman.

Long before the hour set for the ceremony, the crest of Meridian Hill was covered with hundreds of spectators, while directly beneath the statue, surrounded by alternating French and American flags, fluttering in the crisp breeze, a small inclosure with reserved seats was roped off, and a detail of soldiers from Fort Myer and sailors from the *Mayflower* acted as a guard. The statue was covered with two enormous French flags, and an American flag standing at one side of it and a French flag at the other, while beside them the flag of Orleans, Jeanne d'Arc's own flag with its lilies and fleur-de-lis, and the Lorraine Cross, the emblem of the Lyceum—beautiful banners of white and pink satin, magnificently embroidered with gold thread—were held by young girls wearing wide tricolor sashes across their breasts. As the official party took their places in the grand stand, the United States Army Band played the “Marche Lorraine” and after Colonel Sherrill, who acted as presiding officer, had opened the exercises with a tribute 173 to Jeanne d'Arc and explained that the gift had been made possible through “the self-sacrificing efforts of the members of the Société des Femmes de France and especially those of its distinguished President, Madame Polifème,” Madame Polifème made the speech of presentation.

“For liberty and peace Lafayette brought you his sword,” she said, “for peace and justice Jeanne d'Arc brings you her faith. . . . She is a living prayer. The faith of Jeanne d'Arc will keep alive the faith of others, and will bring blessing as a perfect example of womanhood.”

As Madame Polifème finished speaking, Mrs. Harding and Madame Jusserand, the wife of the French Ambassador, pulled the strings that drew the concealing flags gently away from the statue, while the band played the “Marseillaise” and the “Star-Spangled Banner,”

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and, in the hush that followed, the salute of seventeen guns, the proper salute for a field marshal of France—the military rank of Jeanne d'Arc—boomed through the silent air. . . .

The acceptance of the statue by the United States Government had been legalized by a resolution in Congress, and, when the last reverberation of the artillery had died away, Mr. Weeks, the Secretary of War, accepted it in behalf of the Government. He is a wonderful speaker, dignified, sincere, and moving, and though I felt at the time of the rites for the Unknown Soldier at Arlington that I should never again hear as perfect a speech as he made then in introducing the President, he surpassed it as he spoke of Jeanne d'Arc.

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“I do not think a more appropriate site than this could have been selected, for from this commanding position the statue of this heroic maid overlooks one of the great capitals of the world and stands as a monument to the highest attainments in human life—faith in God, devotion to country, and character without a blemish.

“Many individuals have had their day in the life of a nation and have acquired a national reputation. Only a few have rendered such service to mankind that they have attained international reputation and a permanent place in history. Such men and women do not belong to the country of their nativity, but to the whole world. America has given the world two such men, Washington . . . and Lincoln. . . . France has given mankind Jeanne d'Arc.

“Since the days of the shepherd kings of Israel, men have fought and died for liberty, but women have made the greater sacrifice. It is they who have died the greater death. . . . This bronze figure is not only a monument to one of the world's greatest liberators, but to a noble and pure woman.”

The final speech of the day was made by the French Ambassador, who first read a cablegram from President Millerand of France to President Harding, which ran:

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“Your presence and that of Mrs. Harding at the inauguration of the statue of Jeanne d'Arc at Washington touches the French people very deeply. I am sure, therefore, to be its faithful interpreter in addressing to you all my thanks for the tribute you are rendering our national heroine. Her sublime virtue 175 will be better understood by the women of the United States in that, as they have shown us, they know how to practice to the highest degree courage and devotion.”

From the window beside the desk where I write, I look over the open space of Sixteenth Street to Meridian Park—straight across to the statue of Jeanne d'Arc, with her transfigured face and uplifted sword, silhouetted against the winter sky, clear-cut in the morning sunshine, haloed with starlight in the evening. . . . I find myself turning towards it very often, with the prayer that I, as an American woman, and that all American women, remembering that greatest of all human examples of “courage and devotion,” may grow more worthy every day of the tribute of the President of France.

And now, good-by, dearest Prue. My love to you—and “The Homestead”—and the Connecticut Valley.

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

P. S. Do look up the time-tables!

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Washington, D. C. February.

Dear Ruth,

A big bunch of yellow daffodils, fragrant as we never have them in New England, which was sent to me yesterday, served as a lovely reminder that spring is on its way; and now that your letter has come this morning, bringing with it the breath of your Virginia apple orchards, I find my thoughts turning persistently and enviously southwards; yes,



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a little later I think I can “run down,” at least for a week-end. Every time I lament that the Connecticut Valley is so far away, I rejoice that Virginia is so near! But meanwhile I am hastening to write you, as clearly as I can, an account of the final sessions of the Disarmament Conference, so that you may discuss them with your club before I can come and speak about them in person. And I hope I can clear up for you some of those “technicalities” in which you say you have become so involved, after reading column after column in the newspapers, that you are a little hazy as to what actually has been accomplished, and utterly in despair of ever understanding it more clearly.

You girls always used to make fun of me at a party, saying that I was so afraid that I might miss something that I was usually the first to arrive and the 177 last to leave! But I assure you that my early fondness for getting all that I could out of any occasion stood me in good stead at the Fifth Plenary Session, which was so long that one jocular correspondent described it as “an endurance test”; and though the hall was two-thirds empty before it was over, I stayed on to the very end, and would not have missed a minute of it, for history was made before our eyes that morning with a rapidity and a magnitude which it seldom attains. There were more women present than at the earlier sessions, as the very strict rules which prevailed at first became somewhat relaxed as time went on, so the galleries were bright with color, and the comfortable appearance of Mrs. Coolidge, knitting throughout the long proceedings, and Mrs. Longworth with her hat of—both sitting in Mrs. Harding's box—gave an almost homelike atmosphere to the occasion.

The first subject taken up by the chairman, Mr. Hughes, was that of China. The resolutions in regard to several minor questions were introduced, and each power in turn assented to them. And then, followed by a storm of applause, came the long-awaited and eagerly hoped-for announcement that “conversations [Isn't that a delightfully informal word to apply to them?] had been had between the representatives of China and Japan for the purpose of settling the controversy which has arisen in relation to Shantung.” “I am happy to be able to announce to the conference,” said Mr. Hughes, and he did look very happy indeed,

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“that I have been informed by the representatives of China and Japan that *this controversy has been settled.*”

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This fact—one of the greatest diplomatic triumphs of modern times—not the “technicalities” in regard to it, is the point to remember. And I venture to predict, Ruth, that in our grandchildren's history books the date of February 1, 1922, will be written in large type.

When the details of, the agreement had been laid before the conference, Baron Shidehara, the Japanese Ambassador, and Minister Sze, the Chinese Minister, expressed, in brief and graceful little speeches, their gratification over the event, and their gratitude to Mr. Hughes and Mr. Balfour for their good offices in helping to bring it about; and the trembling hands of Mr. Sze, as he spoke, showed, in a manner that was really touching, that even the perfect self-control and poise of the cultured Oriental was not proof against visible emotion on an occasion so wonderful as this one. Then Mr. Balfour, whose mere appearance, by this time, has become an occasion for applause, since he has made himself really beloved in Washington, rose to acknowledge the compliments which had been showered upon him, and to add to his acknowledgment the important announcement that Great Britain proposed to hand back Weihaiwei to China.

Mr. Balfour's speech was followed by the statement from Mr. Hughes that “the proposals of the American Government in relation to the limitation of naval armament have been considered, and an agreement has been reached which is embodied in a treaty now presented for your adoption.

“May I say in conclusion,” he remarked after a long and carefully worded speech describing in detail 179 the plans for the naval holiday, “that no more important or significant treaty has ever been made. It is extraordinary because we no longer *talk* of the desirability of diminishing the burdens of naval armament, *but we actually limit them* . . . .

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Of course it is obvious that this means an enormous saving of money, and the lifting of a very heavy and unnecessary burden from the peoples of the countries who unite in this agreement. This treaty ends, *absolutely ends*, the race in competition in naval armament. We are taking perhaps the greatest forward step in history to establish the reign of peace.”

Mr. Sarraut of the French delegation was the next speaker. In his long address he explained clearly the misunderstood and maligned attitude of France in regard to the naval holiday, in a way that was not only very beautiful, but very illuminating, and when he had finished speaking, the chairman announced that Mr. Root would lay before the conference the resolutions in regard to the conduct of submarines in warfare and in regard to the use of poison gas. And, with all the vigor of a man of thirty-five, in spite of his seventy-seven years, with a clarity and a force and a depth of feeling that I have seldom heard equaled, the great statesman did this in a speech which will surely be one of the most unforgettable of the winter.

“Cynics have said that in the stress of war these rules (for the use of poison gas and submarines) will be violated. Cynics are nearly always shortsighted, and usually the decisive facts lie beyond their range of vision. . . . We may grant that rules limiting the use of implements of warfare made between diplomatists will be violated in the stress of conflict. We may grant that the most solemn obligations assumed by governments in respect to the use of implements of warfare will be violated in the stress of conflict. But beyond diplomatists and beyond governments there rests the public opinion of the civilized world, and public opinion can punish. . . . When a rule of action, clear and simple, is based upon the fundamental ideas of humanity, and right conduct, and the public opinion of the world has reached a decisive judgment upon it, that rule will be enforced by the greatest power known to human history, and the power that is the hope of the world will be a hope justified. . . .

“This treaty is an attempt to crystallize, in simple and unmistakable terms, the opinion of civilization that already exists. This treaty is an appeal to the clear opinion of the civilized

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world, in order that no nation shall dare to do what was done when the women and children of the *Lusitania* went to their death by wanton murder upon the high seas.”

I said earlier in this letter, Ruth, that the date of February 1, 1922, would be written in large type in the history books of our grandchildren because of the Shantung settlement; but, meanwhile, it should be written in letters of flame in the heart of every woman in this country, because it marks the day when hideous and wholesale slaughter was first officially called by its true name, and a great and definite step taken in order that in the future it shall always be so branded.

The principal accomplishment of the Sixth Plenary Session, which came on the fourth of February, and, like the Fifth, lasted more than four hours, was the 181 formal adoption of the two treaties relating to Chinese affairs, of six resolutions relating to kindred subjects, and the “summing up,” by all the delegates, of the great achievements of the conference.

And then at last, on the sixth of February, came the final Plenary Session. Continental Hall never looked more lovely, decorated with palms and the flags of the nine nations, the boxes filled with distinguished women beautifully dressed, the balconies and floor packed to the last inch of standing room, the delegates, as they gathered for the last time around the green baize table, shaking hands and chatting with that perfect friendliness and lack of restraint which has been apparent from the beginning.

“I am happy to announce,” began Mr. Hughes once more, “that the treaty between China and Japan relating to Shantung was signed on Saturday.” He paused until the torrent of applause which swept through the building had subsided. “The treaties which have been approved by the Conference will now be signed in alphabetical order—the United States of America, Belgium, the British Empire, China, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, and Portugal.” I cannot tell you, for I have not decided yet myself, which was the most impressive—the unrestrainedly joyful clapping, or the tense, electrified silence with which it alternated, which filled the hall, as, one after another, the groups of delegates left their

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seats and walked to the place where the treaties lay, the big white sheets with their red seals crackling slightly, the pens moving slowly across the “dotted lines.”

The President arrived while the signing was taking place, but did not come forward on the platform until it was over. Then, standing in front of the advisory committee, which almost filled the stage, he delivered the final address of the conference.

“You have halted folly and lifted burdens and revealed to the world that the one sure way to recover from the sorrow and ruin and staggering obligations of a world war is to end the strife in preparation for more of it, and turn human energies to the constructiveness of peace. Not all the world is yet tranquilized. But here is the example to imbue with new hope all who dwell in apprehension.

“Above the murmurings of a world sorrow not yet silenced; above the groans which come of excessive burdens not yet lifted, but soon to be lightened; above the discouragements of a world yet struggling to find itself after surpassing upheaval, there is a note of rejoicing which is not alone ours, or yours, but which comes from the hearts of men of all the world.”

And then came the benediction.

“Our Father,” prayed Dr. Abernathy, “we bow before Thee this day in grateful acknowledgment of Thy mercies so freely bestowed. We have come to the day when the labors of many weary weeks are ended. . . . Inspire us to labor unceasingly, *each in his own place*, that the era of permanent peace and brotherly love and good will may come. . . . Then shall the whole world be filled with Thy glory.”

There was, I think, some of that glory flooding the room, as the chairman's gavel fell, and the Washington Conference came to an end.

As long as the conference lasted, I accepted all invitations to luncheon with the reservation—“if there is no Plenary Session.” But when it was over, I felt that there need

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be no strings attached to the notes I sent out saying that I would be delighted to lunch with Mrs. So-and-So to meet Mrs. So-and-So—notes that go almost daily at this time of year, for it is the gayest part of all the gay Washington season. I was speedily disillusioned—and I think all those who grumble that this administration works slowly must have had the same experience. On the tenth of February—just five days, you see, after the final session—I was placidly eating a delicious luncheon given in honor of Mrs. Meredith, the wife of the former Secretary of Agriculture, whose recent visit to Washington has been the occasion for all sorts of festivities, when a telephone message from the Capitol informed me that the President would present the treaties to the Senate in person within half an hour—a fact that was not given out until he was actually on his way from the White House. Within ten minutes, thanks to a waiting motor, I was in the Senate gallery, still hungry, to be sure, but on the spot as usual. And—also as usual—I should have been more than sorry if mere food had interfered with such a memorable occasion!

The House of Representatives, as perhaps you didn't know—I find many women don't—has no treaty-making powers; those belong exclusively to the Senate; but the members of the House as well as several members of the Cabinet, almost the only persons, except active governors, who have “the privilege of the floor,” were standing around the chamber as guests, and Mr. Gillett had taken his place beside Mr. Coolidge. 184 Mrs. Harding, with Mrs. Coolidge, Mrs. Gillett and Mrs. Hughes, came into the section reserved for her in the senators' gallery; and the press gallery was packed—always a sure indication that something important is about to occur. Senator Lodge and Senator Simmons were appointed a committee to escort the President in to the chamber; and when he appeared, the treaties themselves, and a complete record of the proceedings of the conference, a huge bundle wrapped in brown paper and tied with heavy red cord, were brought in and laid on the rostrum—looking for all the world like the Saturday-night package of good things for over Sunday that the provident suburb-dwelling father of a family brings home with him.

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“I am not unmindful, nor was the Conference,” said Mr. Harding, “of the sentiment in this Chamber against Old World entanglements. . . . Therefore I can bring you every assurance that nothing in any of these treaties commits the United States or any other power to any kind of an alliance, entanglement or involvement. Either these treaties must have your cordial sanction, or every proclaimed desire to promote peace and prevent war becomes a hollow mockery. . . .

“Much depends upon your decision. . . . Your government has encouraged and has signed the compacts which it had much to do in fashioning. . . . I submit to the Senate that if we cannot join in making effective these covenants of peace . . . we shall discredit the Republic, render future efforts futile or unlikely, and invite discouragement where to-day the world is ready to acclaim new hope.”

I trust, Ruth, that, before the apple blossoms in 185 your lovely orchard have turned to fruit, the Senate will have ratified the treaties, and fulfilled both the letter and the spirit of the obligation, and the opportunity presented to it by President Harding.

But however seriously a senator's wife may spend her mornings at this time of year—and however hungrily her noons—her afternoons are spent in a very different way. She is either paying calls on all the other women in official life, her cards carefully turned down at the corner to show that she has come in person—for, though it used to be considered permissible to merely *send* cards, nowadays they have to be *taken*; or “assisting” some friend who is having a day at home—I think I could swim to China on the tea I have poured this winter—or having a day at home herself. And the one which Mrs. Harris, the wife of the senator from Georgia, and I had together a little while ago was such a happy occasion that I want to tell you about it. The discovery, when we both first arrived here as senators' wives, that our maiden names had been the same—for Mrs. Harris was the daughter of General Joseph Wheeler, the famous “Little Joe” of the War between the States and the Spanish War—and that we belonged to different branches of the same family, she the southern and I the northern, gave us the idea of receiving together once a year, of

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choosing all our assistants among senators' wives, an equal number from each political party, and thus having an "All America team." I am sure you would have felt it was really that if you could have been here—as I wish you might—a week ago Thursday, and have met—besides 186 about three hundred and fifty guests—Mrs. Ashurst of Arizona, Mrs. Borah of Idaho, Mrs. Culberson of Texas, Mrs. Dial of South Carolina, Mrs. Kellogg of Minnesota, Mrs. Oddie of Nevada, Miss Page of Vermont, Mrs. Sheppard of Texas, Mrs. Spencer of Missouri, Mrs. Stanley of Kentucky, and Mrs. Sutherland of West Virginia, pouring tea and coffee and chocolate, serving orange ice and cakes and sandwiches, and "floating" among the visitors, seeing that no one was lonely or hungry. The dining room glowed with tall yellow candles and yellow daffodils and pussy willows turning from gray to yellow; and, just before the party began, two huge boxes of pink carnations and pink roses, one for Mrs. Harris and one for me, arrived from the White House, with pleasant messages for both of us on Mrs. Harding's cards. Of course we "pooled" our lovely gifts, and my drawing-room never looked so pretty as it did that afternoon with an enormous cut-glass bowl of the carnations on a little stand between the windows, and the roses in tall slim vases on desk and table, with the sunshine pouring in upon them.

The final big event of the month—and it is really one of the big events of the year—was the "Spring Breakfast" given by the Congressional Club at Rauschers' in honor of Mrs. Harding, Mrs. Coolidge, and Mrs. Gillett. The large ballroom, with big windows at one side, and mirror-covered walls on the other three, makes a wonderfully effective background for an event of this sort, and yesterday, hung with garlands of southern smilax and gay with flags and the fresh, lacy spring frocks of the three hundred women 187 gathered there, it presented a very lovely sight. At one end of the room, on a raised platform, was the long honor table where the guests of honor, the officers of the club, the heads of the standing committees, and the past presidents sat; and at each of the smaller round tables scattered about the room, there was a "hostess," especially responsible for the pleasure of the other guests seated with her, one third of these "hostesses" representing the Senate, and two thirds the House of Representatives, selected in order of priority in the club. There was an



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informal reception before the “breakfast,” which was delicious, began—we had cream of chicken soup, stuffed deviled lobster with French fried potatoes, timbales of ox tongue in jelly with celery salad, individual flower-shaped ices in spun sugar, and coffee, besides all kinds of attractive little “extras”—and after it a very amusing program was given—the best, I think, that the club has presented since I came to Washington.

It began with three toasts proposed by Mrs. Lenroot, the president of the club. “The wife of the President of the United States: Our first guest of honor . . . has won for herself the affectionate admiration of women everywhere. She has established at the White House the Open Door. . . . She is a friend whom we are privileged to love and admire. We of the Congressional Club are especially proud that she belonged to us before she belonged to the nation. She is *our* First Lady. . . . To Mrs. Harding!”

“The wife of the Vice President: She with the ‘come-hither’ look in her eye; a winner and a keeper of hearts—to Mrs. Coolidge!”

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“The wife of the Speaker of the House of Representatives: gracious, dignified, charming. We are proud of her and we love her. . . . To Mrs. Gillett!”

There was, you may be sure, a very hearty response to all these toasts; and then, at the end of a delightful little speech, Mrs. Lenroot spoke of the purpose and scope of the club, so greatly changed and enlarged within the last few years.

“We have on our advisory committee not only representatives from every state in the Union, but also one from the Philippines, one from Alaska, and one from Porto Rico. The Congressional Club has become tremendously significant. The petty details, the knotty problems of its administration fade away and I see a great vision of a round, glorious whole, a brilliant organization of far-reaching, incalculable influence. Ladies, I give you one more standing toast—the Congressional Club!”

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We were all glad that, when she had finished, Mrs. Roberts, a former president, rose and said we must have one more still—to Mrs. Lenroot.

“Mirrors of Washington—Reflecting without reflections”—a parody composed by the different women who took part in it, came next. It began with a conversation between two dusky handmaidens—or so they appeared at the time; they were really Mrs. Cantrill of Kentucky and Miss Rebecca Dial of South Carolina—armed with cloths and feather dusters, “cleaning up” after a party at the club, and commenting on the guests in a manner that sent us all into roars of laughter. In the course of her labors, one of these “maids” discovered and held aloft a small strip of black ribbon. 189 “What’s dat you done foun’, chile?” inquired her fellow worker. “Why, dat’s Mis’ Harding’s neckband she done dropt.” I think this is the first time the velvet ribbon with its diamond clasp that has become so well known has ever been so facetiously treated! “Has you heard de sad, sad news ‘bout Mis’ Coolidge?”—“Lan’ sakes, no, what does you mean?”—“Well, you knows Mis’ Coolidge loves to come early an’ stay late. And de Vice President, he make her go home at ten o’clock!” And the dear little lady with the “come-hither” look, who certainly does love to have a good time, laughed and clapped harder than any one else.

This dialogue was followed by two clever monologues—“The Caller,” by Mrs. Browne of Wisconsin, and “The New Member’s Wife,” by Mrs. Ramseyer of Iowa. And then a “Mock Session of Congress” took place. An imitation mace, of black and gilt paper mounted on cardboard, was placed in front of Mrs. Lenroot, who became “Mrs. Speaker,” while Mrs. Towner of Iowa, armed with brief case, heavy law books, and various documents of different sizes and shapes, rose to ask leave to address the House “for twenty minutes under the five-minute rule.” “This important bill which I wish to introduce, Mrs. Speaker,” she began, “which is to provide enlargement of the Congressional Club is of vital interest to the entire nation. I cannot urge too strongly, Mrs. Speaker—” But she had gone no further when she was interrupted by a member from the floor whose remarks on the subject of providing free-seed catalogues and an efficient shopping service, though she

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had not 190 time, owing to an engagement to play bridge, to present them in full, she wished inserted in the *Congressional Record*, where she was sure they would not occupy more than fifty pages. There were numerous other interruptions, including a message from the Senate, delivered very rapidly in a sing-song, monotonous voice, nobody paying the slightest attention meanwhile. The whole thing was as good a bit of parody as I ever heard. And finally the session adjourned, to listen to a musical program, beautifully given by Mrs. Chindblom of Illinois, who played the piano, and Mrs. Purnell of Illinois, who sang, There are long, long trains a-winding From the north, south, east, and west, Bringing fine and splendid women To the club we love the best, recited Mrs. Lenroot, carrying out the spirit of parody to the end. And the spirit of something else, too, I think, Ruth—the departure from sectionalism, the grouping of women from all over the country, which alone makes merrymaking like that I have described possible and joyous.

And now, my dear, I must say good-by. Much love as ever.

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. April.

Dear Grace,

The spell of Washington, which I resisted with such characteristic New England determination, when I first came to live here, and under which I have since so completely fallen, never seems to me quite so unique and quite so potent as it does in the spring. Balloon men, with their rainbow-colored bails floating lightly above them in great clusters, and vendors of flowers, stand on every corner; the Japanese cherry blossoms, a mass of fragrant bloom, border the basin and speedway along the Potomac River; the starry dogwood scatters its petals in Rock Creek Park; and wistaria, drooping and feathery, hangs over doorways and porches, and clouds the rotunda at Arlington. The elm trees, that edge the wide, shady streets, meet overhead in graceful arches; hundreds of children

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roll their Easter eggs in the White House grounds and on Capitol Hill, and visit the baby tigers and monkeys at the Zoo. . . . No wonder that thousands of women have acclaimed it as *the* convention city of America, and have chosen spring as convention time.

Suppose we go first to the opening morning session of the Thirty-first Continental Congress of the Daughters of the American Revolution at Continental 192 Hall. No less than twenty-seven hundred women were accredited to the congress this year, among them a great many of the official women in Washington. A number of them were present that morning: Mrs. Spencer of Missouri, who is the Chaplain General of the organization, and who read, before the prayer with which the program began, my favorite Psalm, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," more beautifully than I have ever heard it given before, her noble face lighted with faith as she spoke; Mrs. Newberry of Michigan, a former vice president general, and Mrs. Mondell of Wyoming, elected to that office this year—both, women of great sweetness and charm; Miss Cummins and Mrs. Towner of Iowa. Of course I sat with the New Hampshire delegation, so happy to be with friends from home that I didn't know what to do, and so proud that one of our number, too, Miss Annie Wallace, was elected to the national vice presidency this year. The stage was beautifully decorated with palms and ferns, and large clusters of white lilacs, red roses, and blue lupin; and under the emblem of the society—the gold flax and blue wheel, with thirteen stars at the ends of the spokes lighted with tiny electric globes—which was fastened against the white paneling behind the platform, hung the beautiful picture of the "American convoys on their way to France"—steel-gray ships against a cloudy sky, cutting through the deep-blue, tossing waves of the ocean—which every daughter, through a per capita tax, has been privileged to help to give to the French Government to place in its war 193 museum, and which was formally accepted for France by Ambassador Jusserand that evening. Promptly at half-past ten the bugle call was sounded by a member of the Marine Band, and then, to the strains of "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," the national officers walked down the center aisle from the rear of the building, preceded by one hundred and forty pages—lovely, fresh-faced young girls dressed in soft white—and followed by Mrs.

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Minor, the President General. As the procession advanced, an immense American flag was released from the balcony, dipped until its graceful, drooping folds almost touched Mrs. Minor's head, and then swung proudly up to the middle of the ceiling, where it hung as long as the congress lasted. The speech with which Mrs. Minor opened the session seemed to me in every way worthy, not only of the Daughters of the American Revolution, but of the flag which they had rightly placed in so lofty and striking a position, for it was as sane and sound, and at the same time as spiritual, as any address I have ever heard.

“With great pride I welcome you to-day to your beautiful home now made historic as the scene of the most memorable conference of nations that has ever filled the pages of history. . . . It has been dedicated to an idea old in God's sight, but new in world politics—the idea of generous coöperation, instead of ‘fruitless competition.’ . . .

“A false democracy is seeking to overturn our representative form of government and replace it with mob rule. . . . It is the more insidious because it 194 194 masquerades as true democracy, deceiving the people. . . . But our democracy is threatened by still another danger, the slacker vote, *both male and female*. The last census shows that out of more than 54,000,000 eligible voters, over 37,000,000 did not take the trouble to cast their vote. Over one half of our electorate, in other words, failed in this most sacred duty of citizenship, and in this failure women, as well as men, must bear their full share of responsibility. Is it any wonder that politics are corrupt, that selfish and cowardly men are in office who do not dare to do the right thing? This political fear in high places is the curse of our country; *but whose fault is it?*

“Another insidious danger which assails the heart of our democracy is the slacker home. To hold fast to the ideals of the American home is woman's distinct sphere of action, but this sphere is not bounded by the four walls of a house. It reaches out to better schools, purer movies, cleaner drama, modest dress, better discipline for the child both at home and at school. . . .

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“It is said that the morals of the rising generation are as loose as its galoshes. I do not believe it. I have faith in the young of to-day—faith that they will make good and settle down when the world rocks a little less uneasily in the whirlpools left by the war. The world grows better, not worse, with each succeeding generation. There is too much pessimism. Weak lamentations will not help any. Acid criticism rebounds only against itself. Be constructive. The qualities which have made America what it is were born in the home and must remain there if it is to endure. Build them into *your* home life lest democracy perish; for 195 upon the homes that you make this nation depends for its life.”

The next great gathering that we must attend is the Pan-American Conference of Women and third annual convention of the League of Women Voters, which, as one of the leading newspapers of the country has said (with entire truthfulness, in my opinion), “may be secondary in importance only to the Disarmament Conference.” For when the League of Women Voters called the “women from all the Americas to meet in conference on subjects of special concern to women—education, child welfare, women in industry, prevention of traffic in women, civil and political status of women, and international friendliness,”—I think the summons was almost as vital in the present, and as far-reaching towards the future, as the one which President Harding sent to the nations of Europe last fall. The response was as great as the summons. “It is as if,” Señora de Calvo, the representative from Panama, said in her beautifully interpretive address on the opening day, “three sisters had gathered all their daughters together in loving counsel.” Could any thought, Grace, be more exquisitely expressed? That was exactly the way it seemed to me, too, only I could not have put it half so well.

Although this convention eventually came to Washington—for, as I have said, most conventions seem to do that in the spring—and held a wonderful mass meeting at Continental Hall, it began in Baltimore, and I went over there to attend it, leaving the Continental Congress still in full swing. Again more than twenty-five 196 five hundred women met together; this time in the Century Roof Theater. The galleries were draped

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with blue and yellow bunting, the colors of the League of Women Voters, with the flags of all the nations represented placed along it at intervals, while, under the stars and stripes draped above the platform, hung a disk with the map of the Western Hemisphere upon it—the three Americas in yellow on a deep blue ground. In the course of the day, a beautiful silk Mexican flag, the gift of the President of Mexico, was also hung on the stage; while in the front row of the audience sat the foreign official delegates, each bearing a tall pole, with the name of the country from which she came written in large black letters on a white placard on top of it.

The conference was called to order by Mrs. Maud Wood Park, whose lovely face is always a tremendous inspiration to me even before she has begun to speak. The invocation was pronounced by the Archbishop of Baltimore, and several short addresses of welcome were made. Then Mrs. Park turned the meeting over to Miss Grace Abbott, the chief of the Children's Bureau; for the *first* subject brought up at this gathering of women from Canada to the Argentine was that of Child Welfare. "Every nation must go forward upon the shoulders of its children," said Mrs. Bowen, the president of the Woman's City Club of Chicago, who acted as official delegate for the United States; and, since no one can deny the trenchant truth of this statement, it is fitting that before anything else the mothers of all the Americas should consider lightening the burdens which those little shoulders must bear.

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There were thirty-three official delegates from twenty-two countries present, and, at Miss Abbott's invitation, they marched up on to the stage, still carrying their poles and placards. One after another told us about the work done for children where they lived—beautiful, graceful, dark-eyed women, dressed with the most exquisite and faultless taste, most of them in soft black dresses and large black hats. All spoke with the exception of two or three, in faultless English, and, without any exceptions at all, in cultured, musical, low-pitched voices. In two of the delegates—Señora de Varela, the wife of the minister from Uruguay, and Madame de Veyra, the wife of the resident Philippine commissioner to the

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United States—I could not help taking a special personal interest, because both have long been friends of mine in Washington, and I admire them both tremendously; so I was delighted at the immediate prominence and popularity which both attained at the convention. But there were many others whom I knew, before the morning was over, that I shall never forget—the most conspicuous among them, perhaps, Doña Bertha Lutz, the beautiful feminist from Brazil, founder of the Brazilian League of Advancement for Women, Director of the Great Museum of Rio de Janeiro (which corresponds to our Smithsonian Institute), and a graduate of the Universities of Leipsic and the Sorbonne. I knew, too—though Señorita Mandujano, the lovely representative from Chile, said modestly in her fine speech, “We have come to learn and not to teach,”—that I had learned a great deal about places which we, in our own ignorance, are far too prone to think of as unenlightened.

198 Without a single exception, the work that the women of Latin-America have done for children is nothing short of miraculous. Sometimes the welfare institutions retain quaint old names like “The Grain of Rice” or “The Drop of Milk”—but what they do is by no means so infinitesimal! In the Philippines, the infant mortality rate has been reduced from fifty to twenty-two per cent; Canada announced special interest in the feeble-minded; Uruguay for the illegitimate children; Taumaulipas, a province of Mexico, reported the installation of free shower-baths and dental clinics, and two million out of a three-million-dollar budget devoted to physical education for children; while another Mexican woman spoke casually of feeding six thousand school children each day, because “if they were hungry they could not study well, so first they must be fed—all women must understand that!” Oh, if all women only did!

The second day of the conference began with discussion of the problems of women in industry, with Miss Mary Anderson, Chief of the Women's Bureau, presiding, and Mrs. Raymond Robbins, as the principal speaker. Since the Latin-American countries are agricultural rather than industrial, there is no group in them which corresponds to the nine million women in industry in our own land, and even the production of coffee in Brazil, which gives employment to many thousands, is still carried on in so simple and



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pleasant a way on the vast haciendas, that it creates no conditions similar to our own. Where factories do exist, however, the surroundings seem to be on the whole satisfactory, especially in Peru and Uruguay; and labor

*Copyright by Harris & Ewing* Señora de Varela, the Wife of the Minister from Uruguay

199 is becoming rapidly better organized and better paid, with few sex discriminations. In one or two countries, rather amusing situations were revealed: in the Philippines, the wife is invariably the cashier, and in Colombia, though there is no law to prevent women from working outside their homes and many of them do so, the popular masculine feeling against this is so strong that if a woman insists upon entering the industrial field, her husband sits at home and does nothing! "It costs so little to live in Colombia," Señora de Coronado ended calmly, "that the proceeds of one person's labor can more than supply the needs of any reasonable family." I think there were some of us who felt, as we listened to her, that we would like to move to that halcyon land and see what such a state of things could be like—for a little while, at least!

The next session, in the afternoon, considered the subject of the Prevention of Traffic in Women—"the women who," as Dr. Valeria Parker, the presiding officer, put it, "in an effort to keep body and soul together sell both." The discussion was widened to include that of social hygiene, and the most vital and interesting speaker of the occasion was Emmeline Pankhurst, the former leader of the militant suffragists in England, who now represents the Organized Social Hygiene Movement in Canada. The necessity for abundant recreation and amusement of the right sort during the adolescent period, the importance of education as opposed to ignorance, the insistence that matters of sex shall not be regarded as something secret and sinful, but as the necessary and beautiful foundation for "manhood and womanhood, love, courtship, marriage, 200 parenthood, and all that is most splendid in our civilization," as one speaker forcefully put it, were stressed again and again, as far more powerful in obliterating vice at its source than all the legislation in the world.

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One of the best speeches of the entire conference was made by Mabel Walker Willebrandt, the Assistant Attorney General of the United States, in opening the morning session of the third day, which considered the civil status of women; and her fresh, wholesome personality and distinct charm of manner added not a little to the forcefulness of her remarks. It was, however, the disclosures of one of the delegates from Uruguay, Señora de Vetali, which furnished most of the excitement of the morning; and if the *involuntary* economists in the audience felt, the morning before, that they would like to move to Colombia, the *voluntary* feminists on this occasion seemed impelled to start for Uruguay, for in that complaisant country, it appears, women have only to state that they “no longer wish to live with this person” in order to obtain a divorce, while men are required to furnish proof that there is some good reason for them to separate from their wives. An unmarried woman with a child may proclaim its paternity, and thus oblige its father, or alleged father, to support it; and though this statute has led to blackmail in some cases, so that it has been legally supplanted by another, popular feeling is so strong against the new law that it is not enforced. A woman divorced by her husband for good and proved reason may still see her children whenever, and as much, as she wishes; and other similar conditions were 201 revealed which, I must confess, did not fill me with as much enthusiasm as they did the majority of the audience. However, it was all tremendously entertaining, and to the representative from Uruguay belongs also the credit of making, before the conference adjourned, one of the most interesting resolutions presented: that of the establishment of an organization, like the League of Women Voters in general character, but Pan-American in its scope, with women from all over this hemisphere uniting as its members. This resolution came originally—though Señora de Vetali acted as official spokesman for it—from the Woman's Equal Suffrage Alliance of Uruguay. Although South America is now the only continent which does not now have equal suffrage, there are many local suffrage organizations there already—with the approval of the President of the country. Before the convention of the League of Women Voters ended it passed several important resolutions. The most significant of all was the founding of the “Pan-American Association,” as a result of the resolution presented by Uruguay. “You ask,

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‘What can the women of the Americas do to promote friendly relations?’” said Mr. Hughes in his address before the mass meeting at Continental Hall. “I am tempted to answer, ‘What cannot women do?’” I agree with the Secretary of State. I feel that there is almost nothing that this wonderful new organization will not be able to accomplish.

The final session of the Pan-American Conference, with Mrs. Catt as presiding officer, was supposed to be devoted to the subject of the political status of women; but it was diverted from its original purpose by the 202 appearance on the scene of the “best-known woman in the world, whom every one who knows her loves,” as the chairman of the day gracefully, and truthfully, described her. I wish every woman in the country, to whom the name of “Lady Astor” has come to mean something very wonderful and splendid, could have seen her as she came into the hall that afternoon. She came straight from the train on which she had arrived from New York, her escort of about thirty women closing about her to form a passageway, the audience standing, to the last woman, cheering and shouting and clapping and in some cases crying a little, too, with that tumultuous joy that is so near to laughter. Has any one described her to you as “bonnie,” Grace? That is the good old Scotch word that rose to my own lips as soon as I saw her, and yet, strangely enough, I have heard no one else use it in connection with her. She carried a big bunch of white sweet peas, and had on a soft black coat with broad collar and cuffs of tailless ermine, and a perky little three-cornered hat with a very perky little white feather in it, her fair, curly hair puffed softly out underneath it, and framing her sparkling, rosy face. I am free to confess that I had expected to be disappointed in her—I think that is usually the case, don't you, when you hear a great deal about a woman before you meet her?—but I fell dead in love with her inside of five minutes. Presently she slipped off her coat, revealing a simple little blue crêpe frock (one of us asked her, afterwards, if it was the dress she wore in Parliament, and she said, “Why no! this is my *best* dress!—that is an *old* dress!” in exactly the same horrified tones that a little girl might 203 use if she were asked whether she would wear a gingham apron to a party!). Then, though she was not scheduled to

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speak until the following week, she talked to us very informally and delightfully, for a few minutes.

“This is not my time to speak, for I came here this afternoon just to see you. But I am glad to say why I am here. It is because women have the vote. . . . An editorial I saw remarked, ‘Lady Astor did not have to smash windows in order to succeed in politics.’ I didn’t have to—but it was because others had done it for me first. I know what it is to be a pioneer, and my admiration is great for the gallant women who earned by right the glory I reaped from their labors. . . .

“No right-minded woman really likes notoriety. It is really a hard thing for a womanly woman to endure, but she is willing to do it for a good cause. There is a wide misunderstanding about that. . . .

“I cannot see what woman’s suffrage has to do with religion. The saving grace of religion has always been, it seems to me, that there, at least, men and women are equal. My belief is that God looks into the hearts, and not into the sex, of his creatures. . . .

“The charge has been cast at us that women do not vote, now that we have the ballot. Well, do all the men vote? The world will not be changed by our *having* the vote, but by our *using* it.

“I have been quoted as saying that I did not think much of the Washington Conference. Why, I think it was the beginning of civilization! The whole world looked to Washington—and it will keep on looking 204 there. Every one ought to be grateful to President Harding and Secretary Hughes and the whole administration; but when great and gallant men are going on the right road, it is up to the women to see that they keep on trying!”

Glad as I was to have heard this first informal speech of Lady Astor’s before the conference, and pleased as I was to be invited to several of the parties given in her honor when she came to Washington (I changed my mind about her “best dress” when I saw

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the exquisite white chiffon that she wore at the reception which Mrs. Medill McCormick gave for her), I enjoyed still more the quiet visit which I had alone with her just before I left Baltimore, at the lovely country house near there where she was staying. I could hardly believe my good luck when the message came that she would be glad to see me; much less did I imagine that I would have a whole hour with her and her husband—who, as people are apparently just beginning to realize—is quite as charming and interesting as she is. I learned something of the bills which she has introduced into the House of Commons, the one to remove sex disqualifications, for instance, which was passed in 1919, and those on equal guardianship of children, and the legal position of women, which are still pending. But most of the time she insisted on talking about the questions in which I am most interested; and after discussing the Sheppard-Towner Maternity Bill, and the Equal Rights Bill, we drifted, not unnaturally—for she is a very loyal Virginian—to the subject of the restoration of the Lee Mansion at Arlington. I found that she was deeply interested in the project, and told her of the new Lee Highway Committee, which recently gave a large and important dinner here to which I went, and of the more and more widely expressed hope that, as that great new road is built which is to go through the South all the way from Washington to San Diego, the home of the great general may, at the same time, be restored as a fitting memorial for him. “Oh, you must make people see that it should be done,” she kept reiterating in her earnest, outspoken way, and you may be sure I promised her that I would at least keep on trying.

And now, have you strength and enthusiasm to go to one more convention? I hope so, for a third mighty group of women—not so large in numbers as the other two I have described, but quite as powerful and important—held its Biennial here this last week, and my final duty as acting president of the League of American Penwomen was to preside at the authors' breakfast which was the crowning event of the week's celebration, until Mrs. Geldert, the new president, succeeded me as toast mistress. Notable men and women from all over the country filled the huge dining room at the Wardman Park Hotel; editors and publishers and authors rubbing elbows and exchanging views with senators and

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foreign ministers and other dignitaries. Senator Lodge, who represents, in my mind, the most perfectly balanced combination of an official and a literary light, was good enough to act as host for me, and made a delightful speech, paying a high tribute to creative imagination as one of the most wonderful gifts in the world. Mrs. Coolidge, Madame de Riano, the wife of the Spanish Ambassador, Mrs. Taft, Mrs. 206 Hughes, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Angela Morgan, Cora Rigby, the President of the Woman's National Press Club, and Mr. W. F. Bigelow, the editor of *Good Housekeeping*, were among the other guests at my table. But I was by no means the only hostess blessed with celebrities, for General Pershing, Admiral Coontz, General Lejeune, the Minister of Serbia and Madame Grouitch, the Minister of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Stepanek, Basil King, Bernie Babcock, Mrs. H. H. Beach—to mention only a few of the celebrities—were all there, and many of them made speeches. It was a wonderfully pleasant way in which to finish my term of office, and, to me, the poem which Angela Morgan wrote for the occasion and recited just before the “ranks broke,” expressed better than any words which I could say the message which I wanted to send out, with all good wishes, not only to the new administration in the League of American Penwomen, but to my friends everywhere.

Women, you have it in your hands  
Whether the storm that battered down the world,  
Man against man in futile passion hurled;  
Whether the flood that covered all the lands  
And spewed its mighty wreckage on the sands  
Shall come again to drown the earth some day  
— O women, you shall say!

Women, you have it in your soul,  
The superskill, the courage that shall send  
The tides of hatred to another end;  
The strength to stay the deluge from its goal,  
The patience of the mother to control,  
The power which is love, to men untaught—  
By this shall all your miracles be wrought. . . .

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And now we are through with conventions, for this year at least, and I'm going to slip off to Virginia for a few days and smell the roses, and look at the mountains—and incidentally make up more sleep than you ever lost in your life!

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. May.

Dear Susan,

I've just come back from the most delightful trip down the Potomac in the *Mayflower*. I'm so refreshed by the cool breeze, and the delightful company of the Ladies of the Senate, who, with Mrs. Coolidge at their head, made up Mrs. Harding's first party on the *Mayflower* this season, that in spite of the chaos reigning with half-packed trunks—for I'm trying to move the family to the country on the installment plan!—and a sick small boy in the house, I am sitting down to begin a letter to you. Although that, too, may have to proceed on the installment plan, for these are busy days. We really had a beautiful time on our little cruise, leaving directly after lunch, and returning about six, having our tea on board, anchored in front of Mt. Vernon, where, as we reached it, a most interesting ceremony, always observed on board the *Mayflower* at this historic spot, took place. First, the dear bugle call “to Attention” rang out, followed by the tolling, three times, of the ship's bell; then there was a parade of the guard and band, and “Taps” sounded; and finally, while the officers and men of the crew stood at salute on the side of the boat facing Mt. Vernon, the hand played “The Star-Spangled Banner.” There was music throughout the trip, and 209 tables for bridge—covered with gold-fringed black suède, a covering which I had never seen used for that purpose before, and which makes an ideal surface for card playing—in the drawing-room. Mrs. Reed of

Invitation to a Cruise on the *Mayflower*.

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210 Missouri, Mrs. Stanley of Kentucky, Mrs. Gudger of Montana and I had a fine game on the way home; and Mrs. Harding, who had been busily going about helping to pass the sandwiches while we had our tea, joined us for a few minutes to wish us luck and tell us to “go to it” before she went back on deck. She is a wonderful player herself, and one of the best games I ever had in Washington was with her while she was still a senator's wife, at a party which Mrs. Kahn of California gave at the Congressional Club; but this time, though we teased her to stay with us “for just one hand,” she preferred to get as much fresh air as she could. “You girls don't realize how good it seems to me to get out of doors for a while,” she said as she left us, and much as we wanted her, none of us had the heart to urge her to remain, for this dear lady who has given of herself so unsparingly to all of us ever since she entered the White House is certainly entitled to all the rest and relaxation that she can have in the midst of her strenuous life. However, she seems to be standing the strain remarkably well, and I never saw her look better than she did to-day, in a shaggy gray coat and a pleated dress and flower-covered hat in delicate shades of gray and violet and rose. All the senatorial ladies bloomed out in their new sport clothes, crêpes and tweeds and silk jerseys in lovely spring colors, so that they made a very attractive, as well as a very happy, throng.

Parties in Washington are a trifle less formal in the spring than they are in the winter, but they are exactly as frequent, and fully as delightful. I have been to a great many this last month—a number of 211 them given in honor of Mrs. Coolidge, who is certainly the most fêted woman in the United States. This is partly, of course, because she is the Vice President's wife, which means that parties are her natural lot in life as long as her husband occupies that position. But it is also very largely because she has made herself so genuinely beloved by everybody, for I honestly believe, that even if her husband became a private citizen again to-morrow, she would still be almost as much sought after as she is now. She has tremendous vitality and enthusiasm, perfect poise and never-failing tact, and, above all, a simplicity and sincerity that are worth all the other good qualities put together.



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The first of the luncheons for Mrs. Coolidge about which I wish to tell you was given this last week by Mrs. Culberson, the wife of the senior senator from Texas, and her sister, Mrs. Schluter. They are my next-door neighbors, and so kind and friendly that they constantly make me feel as if I were at home in the Connecticut Valley—I am sorry to say that I do not think real neighborliness is always a distinguishing characteristic of large cities! There were several senators' wives among the party of fifteen—Mrs. Pittman of Nevada, Mrs. Ashurst of Arizona, Mrs. Calder of New York and Mrs. France of Maryland—and we all gathered about a beautiful round polished table, set with exquisite doilies of duchesse lace, with a center-piece of pink roses and white lilacs, in a tall silver basket, and huge bunches of Hamburg grapes, lying on fresh green leaves in lower baskets at either end of the table. Entertaining in Washington is a fine art, developed as it is in no other place where I have been, 212 and the menus are always delicious; but this one seemed to be especially well chosen: chilled fruit in glasses on beds of crushed ice; consommé with whipped cream; fresh shrimp patties with French-fried potatoes; stuffed roast squabs with mushrooms and asparagus; hearts of lettuce with shredded ham and celery; strawberry ice cream with spun sugar served in candy rose petals and leaves of the most exquisitely colored, transparent pink and green sugar texture—I *never* saw such a tempting dessert! And, of course, all the attractive extras like olives and celery and nuts, chocolates and after-dinner mints.

Next the beautiful Hale house on lower Sixteenth Street was thrown open for a party for the first time since I came to Washington, for Mrs. Hale has been in mourning for a long time. She holds an official record held by only one other woman—Mrs. Elkins of West Virginia—having been the hostess of a senator through three generations. Her father was Senator Chandler of Michigan, and one of her sons has succeeded his father as senator from Maine; he is still unmarried. I think there is no house in America—not even the White House—to which I have felt more honored to receive an invitation than to this one; for Mrs. Hale, in my mind, stands for all that is finest in American womanhood of intelligence, culture, and dignity. Her guests to-day included all the ladies of the Senate, all the ladies

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of the Maine delegation, and a few other close personal friends; so you see it was a very large party—over seventy—and the tables at which we sat—gay with bright spring flowers—overflowed the big dining room, and extended into the 213 entrance hall, above which, on a little balcony, a stringed orchestra was playing. By a curious coincidence, Mrs. White, the wife of Representative White of Maine, was entertaining at a large reception at the Congressional Club to-day, too, in honor of her mother-in-law and Mrs. Frank Briggs, the daughters of the late Senator Frye of Maine, and most of the luncheon guests went there afterwards; so it seemed like “Maine’s own day” at the Capital, and a day, you may be very sure, of which Maine has every right to feel extremely proud.

Besides these parties for Mrs. Coolidge, I think I have enjoyed most one of the “Monday Evenings in March” which Miss Mabel Boardman gave this year, because, as she put it, one of her friends had suggested that it was unfortunate that we met in a social way only at luncheons and dinners and balls; and that, after the rush of the season was over, a “post-prandial cigar and a prohibition sandwich,” enjoyed in pleasant company, would be very alluring! They certainly proved to be, and there was more than a hint of the old French salons which their brilliant hostesses and distinguished guests made so justly famous in the “At Home” to which Harry and I “dropped in” quite late one evening recently, after going first to a large dinner given in honor of the new Postmaster-General, Dr. Work, and Mrs. Work.

The Chief Justice and Mrs. Taft were among Miss Boardman’s guests that evening; and I was especially glad to see them in that pleasant social way; the most important thing in a legislative sense that has happened in Washington this month—and I do not think 214 I am going too far when I say it is the most important that has happened in the country—is the decision rendered by the Supreme Court declaring the Child Labor Law unconstitutional. This was followed by the introduction of a joint resolution in Congress—presented in the Senate by Mr. Johnson of California, and in the House by Mr. Fitzgerald of Ohio, and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary—proposing an amendment to the Federal Constitution by giving Congress the right to regulate or prohibit the employment of

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children under eighteen years of age. This bill has been followed by another, introduced by Representative Huddleston of Alabama, and referred to the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, providing that it shall “be unlawful to place in interstate commerce the product of any mine or any manufactured article in the production of which the labor of children under fourteen has been used, without notice of such fact being conspicuously placed thereon by tag, marker, or other means.” There was a third, not unlike the first in form, introduced in the House by Mr. Perlman of New York, and in the Senate by Mr. Johnson of California. Senator Underwood, speaking of the decision on the floor of the Senate the day after it was rendered, on the other hand, concurred with it most heartily.

“I suppose there is not a man on this floor, and but few in America,” he said, “who are not in thorough accord with the viewpoint that children of a tender age should not be worked in the factories and foundries.... As a matter of fact, most of the states of the Union have adopted laws protecting children.... 215 My own state has a most meritorious law.... But in the formation of our Government, the Constitution granted certain powers to the Federal Government and reserved the balance of the powers to the states. Questions involving police regulations, and the protection of the health and happiness of the people, were left to the states, and there they should remain because . . . conditions in Maine are not those found in Alabama, and the conditions of New York are not those of San Francisco.... Those who have sympathetic hearts for the child and would like to see laws of that kind (that is, to increase federal power) extended to the furthestmost parts of the Union, can well see that if Congress has the power, under the guise of taxation, to say how many hours and under what conditions a child may labor, it would have the same power to say that all labor in the United States, agricultural or mechanical, should be allowed to work only four hours a day.”

In addition to all this congressional excitement, the newspapers have been full of editorials on the subject; the fact that the Republican platform of 1920 promised that “if the present Child Labor Law is found unconstitutional or ineffective, we shall seek other means to enable Congress to prevent the evils of child labor,” and that the Democratic platform

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urged “coöperation with the states in the prohibition of child labor,” has been quoted more than once. Organizations of women are stirred to their very depths, and the American Federation of Labor has called an immediate conference here, and the three cases from North Carolina are the immediate cause of all this discussion, and 216 I was in the Supreme Court when they were being tried. The Child Labor Law, enacted in 1919 and intended to “regulate the employment of children in any mill or cannery, workshop, factory or manufacturing establishment under the age of fourteen, or in any mine or quarry under the age of sixteen, by imposing an excise tax of ten per cent upon the net annual profits of those employing such labor,” was declared unconstitutional by the same district court as applied to these three cases. I want to tell you a little about the trial, partly because I have never yet described the Supreme Court to one of you girls in writing to you, but still more because it seems to me extremely essential that you should be able to follow its action in this matter, which is likely to be so far-reaching in its consequences. The Supreme Court chamber is a beautiful apartment, far the most beautiful, I think, in the Capitol; it is semicircular in form, with a carved, vaulted ceiling, and busts of the former justices placed between marble pillars surrounding the room. The hangings are all of rich red velvet, and back of the bench of the Supreme Court, with its huge deep-cushioned, leather chairs, is a group of columns of gray Potomac marble which supports a small gallery. There is an atmosphere about it which is, in some undefinable way, very different from that of the Senate and the House of Representatives. A complete and solemn stillness reigns; the light shines benignantly across the fine faces of the justices; and I felt, as I was waiting for the session to begin, that everything contributed to give it grace and dignity, color and character, and to make it worthy of its wealth of historical 217 associations, of splendid tradition merging into present-day facts.

On the tick of twelve, the justices file into the Supreme Court room and take their places; Chief Justice Taft in the center; at his right, Mr. Justice McKenna, Mr. Justice Day, Mr. Justice Pitney, and Mr. Justice Brandeis; at his left, Mr. Justice Holmes—who was celebrating his eighty-first birthday on this particular occasion—Mr. Justice Van Devanter,

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Mr. Justice McReynolds, and Mr. Justice Clarke. As they do this the Court Crier, striking the table before him with his gavel, announces, "The Honorable the Chief Justice and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States." The session is not opened by prayer as it is in Congress, but after this first announcement the Crier makes another, quaintly worded: "Oyez-oyez-oyez (hear ye). All persons having business with the Honorable the Supreme Court of the United States are admonished to draw near and give their attention, for the Court is now sitting. God save the United States and this Honorable Court."

The first case on the calendar, a minor one, disposed of, Judge Beck, the Solicitor-General, began the argument for the United States against the Vivian Cotton Mills, the Drexel Furniture Company, and the Atherton Mills, all of North Carolina.

The case of the Atherton mills, which was selected by the Government for a test case, and which had already been argued once before the Court at the last session and set for reargument, he asked to have dismissed as "moot"—that is, as no longer a live issue and, therefore, not debatable. The boy in whose behalf the proceedings were brought, and who, at the time they began, was under the legal working age, had since then passed his sixteenth birthday and could, therefore, obtain no relief by a legal decision, according to Judge Beck's argument.

The case by the Vivian Cotton Mills to restrain the Collector of the Internal Revenue from collecting a tax levied upon it because it employed child labor, should be dismissed, the Solicitor-General said, because a wrong method of opposing the law had been chosen. The tax, he claimed, should have been paid under protest, and a suit then brought to recover the money, on the ground that the law was unconstitutional.

These, briefly put, are the technical points of the case as Judge Beck presented them. They explain the letter of the law, but the spirit of it was much more clearly brought out in the latter part of the statement.

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“In not less than fifty cases,” he said, “the Supreme Court has declined to question either the morals or the motives of Congress in levying a tax. This is not a question of either. It is a question of the right and power of Congress to impose excise taxes, and of that there can be no doubt. It is constitutional for Congress to levy a tax—a federal tax—upon persons and corporations employing children. The fact that this tax makes it expensive and difficult for them to do so in no way affects the legality of the case. The power of Congress is limited only by the prohibition that it must not actually destroy the effective operation of legitimate agency in the states.”

Judge Beck illustrated his argument by comparing 219 the infinitesimal tax recently placed upon butter—a quarter of a cent a pound—with a large one—fourteen cents a pound—placed upon oleomargarine colored to look like butter; and by recalling the tax formerly levied on liquor and still levied on tobacco, the “legality” of which no one has questioned, though no one can be in doubt as to the “motive” that prompted them.

The cases brought by the Atherton Mills and the Vivian Cotton Mills were dismissed, as the Solicitor-General requested, on technicalities; but the one brought by the Drexel Furniture Company, which was found to be in proper form, was argued, and it was in regard to this that the law was declared invalid in the judgment of the Supreme Court, with one dissenting voice—that of Justice Clarke.

“Does this law impose a tax with only that incidental restraint and regulation which a tax must inevitably involve?” the Chief Justice asked in delivering the opinion, “or does it regulate by the use of the so-called tax as a penalty? If it is a tax, it is clearly an excise. If it were an excise on a commodity or other thing of value, we might not be permitted under previous decisions to infer solely from its heavy burden that the act intends a prohibition instead of a tax. But this is more.... In the light of these features of the act, a court must be blind not to see that the so-called tax is imposed to stop the employment of children within the age limits prescribed.... It is the high duty and function of this court, in cases regularly brought to its bar, to decline to recognize or enforce seeming laws of Congress,

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dealing with subjects not intrusted to Congress, but left committed by the supreme law of 220 the land to the control of states. We cannot avoid the duty, even though it requires us to refuse to give legislation designed to promote the highest good. The good sought in unconstitutional government is an insidious feature because it leads citizens and legislators of good purpose to promote it without thought of the serious breach it will make in the ark of the covenant or the harm which will come from breaking down recognized standards. In the maintenance of local self-government, on the one hand, and the national power on the other, our country has been able to endure and prosper for near a century and a half....

“For the reasons given, we must hold the Child Labor Tax Law invalid, and the judgment of the district court is affirmed.”

“And how do you feel about it yourself?” you are very naturally asking. I felt almost sure, Susan, when I left the Supreme Court after hearing the cases argued for two days, that the verdict which had been rendered was the one which should be rendered. The letter of the law, alas, seemed to me all too plain. But that such a law should be allowed to endure seems to me unthinkable. I formed a high regard—from hearing his statement—for Judge Bynum and his associates and felt a strong conviction that the company which he represented had acted in good faith. But, at the same time, I could not help feeling that there were many which had not. So I went down the Capitol steps weary and sick at heart. For of one thing there can be no possible doubt: nothing that makes childhood sad, or evil, or hideous, no matter where it exists, no matter upon what laws or local conditions it is founded, 221 must be allowed to endure. Child labor does all those things. If no state has found the remedy for it, the states must keep on trying until they do. If no federal law has yet been framed to meet it, a federal law must be found which will. There is nothing more powerful in forcing governments, both local and national, to act than public opinion, the public opinion which is made up of hundreds of thousands of private opinions belonging to average men and women, fathers and mothers, who can—and should—insist that not only

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their own children, but every child, should run no risk of being forced to sell its birthright for a mess of red pottage.

And now I want to turn for a little from the cause of children to the cause of women—for the two are closely allied, and the latter, too, has been much in evidence in Washington this month. It is iris time here, and last Sunday, as I walked down Maryland Avenue to take my place with Inez Haynes Irwin at the head of the writers—one of the many groups of white-clad women assembled to march in a great procession to the dedication of the new headquarters of the National Woman's Party—it seemed to me that the beautiful purple, white and yellow banners, proudly upheld along the line under the shady trees, looked like so many tricolored fleur-de-lis; while the fine old house which Mrs. Belmont, the president of the organization, has recently given it, and for which we had met to dedicate, was wreathed from attic to cellar with the same decorations. The house has a notable history, but I am sure that it never looked more lovely than it did on this perfect May afternoon. Thousands of 222 people were gathered in the open park before it, while on the raised platform immediately in front of it sat a notable company comprising not only the highest officers of the Woman's National Party, but members of the Diplomatic Corps and of Congress and of the highest circles of residential society. It seems to me that there can be no clearer example of the triumph of this organization than this homage to it by those who in its early militant days either derided it or held it in low esteem. While, on the other hand, its own broadmindedness could hardly be better exemplified than in the compliment it paid me—a former anti-suffragist and a nonmember—in asking me to carry the writer's banner on this, its day of recognition. I certainly have never had a tribute which I appreciated more.

The formal exercises were very beautiful and dignified, entirely worthy, it seemed to me, of the occasion. I especially want to quote to you a little of Mr. Caraway's speech—he represented the Senate—which seemed to me especially interpretive and vital:



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“In the olden times, sculptors, painters and poets depicted woman always with bowed head. Bowed she was at her toil, her prayer—bowed over the cradle and the tomb. . . .

“Times, thank God, are changed. Woman stands now with head erect. The distaff is no longer the emblem of submission, but the banner of leadership—leadership among those who think, who love justice and equality. . . . May all the prayers for justice here prayed be answered, and all the dreams for equal rights here come true.”

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A challenge to the cause of children, a triumph for the cause of women, and, finally, a tribute to the cause of liberty—so the month has run. For the last great event of which I must tell you is the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial, that splendidly simple temple which stands alone on a slight elevation above a bend in the Potomac River, facing the Washington Monument across a stretch of green parkway, the spearlike shaft of the one and the fluted columns of the other reflected alike in the placid water of the long, narrow lagoon which lies between them. The interior contains only one vast chamber, supported by pillars, with two mural paintings by Guerin on either side, one representing emancipation and the other reunion, placed above the carved texts of the Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural; while in the center, facing the open entrance, is the wonderful seated figure of Lincoln by Daniel Chester French, with this simple inscription above it:

In this Temple As in the hearts of the people  
For whom he saved the Union The memory  
of ABRAHAM LINCOLN is forever inscribed

The exercises of dedication were as severely simple as the temple itself, and as the man whom both commemorate. There was no military parade, no floral display. But nearly a hundred thousand people filling 224 the parkway and assembling even as far away as on the Virginia shore of the Potomac River were gathered together, and there were more than five thousand in the reserved section on the platform: the diplomatic corps;

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the Senate and House of Representatives, who each marched together in a body; the diplomatic and congressional ladies, many of them looking very lovely in soft, pale-colored dresses; General Pershing with his aides; members of the Grand Army of the Republic, and also—I am glad to say—the United Confederate Veterans, the American flag fluttering between them. In the center of the stage stood Chief Justice Taft, who is the chairman of the Lincoln Memorial Commission, with the President and Mrs. Harding, the Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge, and Mrs. Taft on one side of him, and Robert Lincoln, the only living son of the great President, and Representative Cannon—“Uncle Joe”—of Illinois, who was a member of the convention nominating Lincoln in 1860, on the other; the speakers for the day, and the other members of the commission occupying positions of honor near at hand. After the Marine Band had played “America,” the ceremonies began with the invocation by the Reverend Wallace Radcliffe, pastor emeritus of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, where Lincoln worshiped when he lived in Washington. Then General Pilcher, Commander in Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, ordered the presentation of the flag, and made a short speech accepting the memorial in the name of that organization; the prayer of dedication was pronounced by Bishop Fallows, Chaplain in Chief—a short prayer 225 but one so sincere and earnest that the Spirit it invoked seemed to hover about the temple long after he had finished speaking. Never, at a church service, have I been more conscious of an atmosphere of reverence and sanctity.

As was entirely fitting, a colored man was one of the speakers of the occasion, and the next address was made by Dr. Robert Moron, the President of Tuskegee Institute, who paid the tribute of his race to its emancipator; he was followed by Edwin Markham, who read his poem, “Lincoln, the Man of the People.”

The color of the ground was in him, the red earth, The smack and tang of elemental things . . . The strength of virgin forests braced his mind, The hush of spacious prairies stilled his soul. His words were oaks in acorns; and his thoughts Were roots that firmly gripped the granite truth. . .

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Finally came the addresses of presentation for the Lincoln Commission by the Chief Justice, and the speech of acceptance for the nation by the President of the United States. You have read both, of course, and perhaps you have already felt in reading, as I did in listening, that Harding had never before in his public utterances risen to such strong sublimity of speech. And yet, after all, it is a rather simple part which I especially wish to quote for you, and which I hope will mean as much to you as it did to me. It was a quotation from Lincoln himself:

“‘If I were trying to read,’ he said, when the storm of criticism against him was at its height, ‘much less answer all the attacks made upon me, this shop might 226 as well be closed to other business. *I do the best I know how, the very best I can, and I mean to keep on doing it to the end.* If the end brings me out all right, what is said of me will not amount to anything. If the end brings me out all wrong, ten angels swearing that I was right would make no difference.’”

As the President was speaking, I could not help thinking of the women, all over the United States, deprived of the privilege of celebrating Memorial Day as those of us at the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial were celebrating it. Instead, they were going, as I often used to myself, after the services at their quiet little local churches were over, with little cheap cotton flags and bunches of flowers from their own gardens—bridal wreath and peonies, roses and lilacs and iris—to make the graves in small country cemeteries fragrant and beautiful; *doing the best they could* to commemorate the day. And in doing the best we can, on this and every other day, lies, I believe—and believe it more and more firmly the older I grow—the real test of success. It may not take a man, as it took Lincoln, from a log cabin to the White House; it may not take a woman from a farmhouse to a palace; but it takes them somewhere. If they know in their own hearts that they were doing their very best, I do not think that it particularly matters whether any one else knows it or not. We are altogether too prone to forget the balm that comes from a clear conscience, and to worry over “What will people say?” The woman who sings a great song or writes a great poem

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*receives* more recognition, of course, than the one who cooks a good dinner, or makes a simple garment well, or nurses a sick child back to health; but she does not *deserve* any more. I am sure that “the end will be all right” for one as well as the other.

With my dear love, as ever,

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. June.

Dear Elizabeth,

This last month has dragged itself through, such a succession of wet, hot, sticky days, that it has been very trying for every one in Washington, but especially, I think, for senatorial Washington—as the Senate has been in session eleven and twelve hours a day for five and sometimes six days in the week, and it is pretty hard to work constructively under such conditions! So please don't criticize too severely the occasional outbursts of senatorial temper, and the more than occasional delay in senatorial accomplishment of which you have doubtless read in the papers. In spite of these long sessions, there is still no prospect of adjournment, and some of the senators are trying hard to have cloture established—that is, a rule to limit debate within certain fixed boundaries. There is opposition to this on the ground that as the House of Representatives has cloture, there must be no risk run of the hasty passage of legislation in the Upper House—that there must be ample time for the free and deliberate discussion and deliberation of all important bills: and of course there is much to be said on this side. On the other hand, the privilege which allows a senator to arise at any time and talk for any length of time on any subject, unless there is unanimous 229 consent—which is very hard to obtain—to the contrary, is one which admits of abuse and creates delay. I don't know whether you're a conservative or a progressive on this subject, but I can't help feeling that, if you were a senator's wife, and didn't see him from

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one week's end to another, and had no hope of a real summer vacation for a united family and still couldn't

An Invitation from the Serbian Legation.

see that the nation was really benefiting in the least from such a state of affairs, there wouldn't be much doubt of how you'd feel!

One of the pleasant parties this month was the brilliant reception which the Minister of Serbia and Madame Grouitch gave on the wedding day of young King Alexander of Serbia and Princess Marie of Rumania, to celebrate an event which is of international importance, since it unites two of the principal Balkan kingdoms, and of special interest to Americans on account of the impending visit of Queen Marie of Rumania, the bride's beautiful mother, to this country before very long. The musicians were dressed in native costume, very picturesque and striking, while the Serbian flag was introduced into all the decorations, and the long tables where the refreshments were served were gay and fragrant with flowers in the national colors. All official Washington, in spite of the heat, went to this party, and all the members of the Legation staff received with the host and hostess; and Madame Grouitch, who is always a vision of loveliness, looked even more charming than usual in an exquisite gown of pale gray satin veiled with filmy black lace—a combination which seems to be extremely popular here this summer. I have spoken before of the fact that nearly all the European representatives to this country have American wives, and have told you how much I like and admire them all. But there is not one, in my opinion, who, by her kindness and tact quite as much as by her brilliancy and beauty, has brought credit both to her native and to her adopted land as the one who welcomed us so cordially and so graciously that day. It was, as it happened, my own wedding anniversary, and since Harry was, as usual, in the Senate from eleven in the morning until eleven at night—I know I've mentioned this already, but I can't help it—I'm even quite likely to mention it again, I feel so strongly about it!—I was more than glad that as I couldn't have a celebration of my own, I could have one by proxy, at least!

*Copyright by Underwood & Underwood, Washington, D. C. Madame Grouitch, The Wife Of The Former Minister Of The Serbs, Croats And Slovenes*

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Two days later came the wedding reception of Catherine Hughes, the daughter of the Secretary of State and the first Cabinet bride of this administration, and Mr. Waddell of New York at the Pan-American building, which is, I think, one of the most beautiful in the world. The bridal party received in the great ballroom called “the hall of the Americas” on the second floor, approached by wide, stately staircases on either side of an open patio, where a cool, graceful fountain foams and bubbles, surrounded by tropical plants, in which brilliantly colored parrots, absolutely free and uncaged, make their homes. And, at the end of the magnificent apartment, with its crystal chandeliers and white pillars and long polished surfaces, where the receiving line stood, a tall screen of pink rambler roses and Easter lilies ran across its entire length, forming the loveliest “bridal bower” that I ever even imagined. The bridesmaids looked like summer blossoms, too, in their crisp organdie frocks and wide hats—one yellow, one lavender, and one pink—and so did the two little pages, in pure white broadcloth, while the whole great hall seemed gardenlike with the exquisite dresses which all the women guests wore for its flowers—pale-tinted laces, delicate chiffons, the sheerest of embroideries. But the bride was certainly “the fairest flower of all,” in her simple white satin dress trimmed with ropes of pearls, and a coronet of pearls fastening the tulle veil on her dark, stately young head. Her bouquet was a “shower” of lilies of the valley, with a fanlike arrangement of white ostrich plumes supporting it in the rear—a most effective and unusual combination. Red velvet 232 carpeting, vivid bands of color, covered the gravel walks in the Aztec garden back of the building; and the refreshments were served in the “map-room” on the ground floor, on tables decorated with pink roses and blue larkspur. Of course *everything* was delicious and attractive, but there was one huge cake which caught my eye—and incidentally made my mouth water!—which was quite as unique as the bridal bouquet. The foundation looked like any large circular

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layer cake with thick white frosting; but on top of that, lying on its side, was a big white bell, tongue and all, garlanded with white roses—and made entirely of white spun sugar!

But the best party of all was the garden fête which President and Mrs. Harding gave for the wounded veterans, two thousand of them from all the hospitals in the vicinity, and I was more than pleased to be invited to it. My card of admission was for the front door—have I told you before, Elizabeth, that guests do not all use the same entrances at the White House functions, so that a great deal of confusion and delay is avoided by this skillful handling of large crowds—but my chauffeur made a mistake and deposited me at the east entrance before I had time to stop him; and when I got out to explain the error to the policeman on duty he sternly informed me that “foot pedestrians” (don't you love that?) mustn't go in the front door! So, as I never argue when it won't do any good, I told him I would do my best to look like a wounded soldier—at which he didn't even crack a smile—and joined the throng in the long, glassed-in corridor beside the formal garden, with its beds of friendly pansies and 233 sweet-smelling box hedges. I was glad I did, for a happier group I haven't seen in a long time. Of course the men who were not able to walk were brought in big motor trucks and ambulances; but many of them could walk, and I assure you they were in the very highest possible spirits over their “spree.” I was glad, too, that I saw those who were comparatively well first, because afterwards I met a good many who can't, I feel sure, share the general feeling that “we have almost forgotten that there ever was a war.” There were one hundred and fifty men there who are totally blind, and when I saw one man, not only blind but with both arms missing, being guided gently up to the President and Mrs. Harding and General Pershing, who received with them, all the sunshine and joy of the afternoon seemed to vanish for a few minutes; and when the receiving line broke to go and shake hands with the men who were still too crippled to stand, and who were placed in their wheeled chairs under some big, shady trees, I strayed away and sat down and looked the other way for a little while—and I didn't see what I was looking at very clearly. All I could see, or think of, were the President's own words in a speech he made about the war in New York, as vividly as if they had been written in

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letters of flame ten feet high on those sloping, velvety lawns—"IT MUST NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN."

There were almost as many nurses as soldiers at the party, some of them wearing their floating, graceful Red Cross veils, others very trim in blue uniforms with crisp white caps and aprons; and fifty young girls employed in the Veteran's Bureau, one from Hawaii, one 234 from the District of Columbia, and one from every state in the Union, were invited by Mrs. Harding to "assist" her. Mrs. Coolidge, and the wives of most of the members of the Cabinet, Mrs. Pomerene of Ohio, Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt and Miss Mabel Boardman were all there, too, and one man said with relish over a big dish of ice cream—"them official ladies add considerable, don't they?" I certainly hope we did! The Marine Band "added," too, with its splendid music, and the big, attractive tents, striped like the stick candy that children like so much, full of delicious things to eat and drink. But most of all, of course, the President and Mrs. Harding "added"—writing autographs, exchanging stories and expressing the deepest interest and curiosity in the medals and ribbons "for reward of valor" which many of the men wore. And if there is a recording angel who writes down what happened day by day I think he must have added something, too, that night—a large mark beside the names of a Chief Executive and a First Lady who are not too busy or too thoughtless to remember that there was a war.

Your letter recalled to me the good times we used to have in amateur out-door theatricals together, by telling me some of the wonderful things that are being done in the open-air amphitheatres in California, and I was glad that you, as well as I, have kept up your interest in that sort of thing. Washington in early summer lends itself perfectly to the spirit of pageantry, and it was my great privilege recently to take part in a pageant which, I am sure, must have been one of the most beautiful and impressive ever produced—indeed, 235 one woman in official life here, who is widely traveled and deeply cultured, told me that, in her opinion, it was as deeply moving as the Passion Play at Oberammergau; and though I have not seen that, I cannot help feeling that her opinion was a wise one. "The Cross Triumphant—a Pageant of the Church in England and America" in seventeen



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“pictures” and four interludes, was given with a cast of seven hundred—persons of all denominations taking part—I am so glad, aren't you, that we are at last beginning to see that the way to be really undenominational is not to avoid all church movements because they do not happen to be connected with the church to which we ourselves belong, but to *help* them all, if we can?—before an audience of ten thousand in the Cathedral Close on a night which seemed sent straight from Heaven, it was so ethereally lovely: a great burnished golden moon hung in a soft dull sky, shedding its light on the graceful, unfinished arches of the Cathedral in the distance, on the high screen of wistaria and green leaves which formed the background for the raised platform used as a stage, on the clusters of flowering shrubs and rustling trees which formed its setting, and on the rustic cross, raised on a little hill at the left of the scene. And, in this ideal sylvan setting, to the strains of hidden music, picture after picture was presented, allegorically symbolical or historically faithful, showing different phases of the progress of Christianity from the earliest days in the mother country, until the present time in our own.

The first scene, sponsored by Lady Geddes, the wife of the British Ambassador, depicted the legend of 236 Joseph of Arimathea, the friend of Christ, planting his staff, cut from the same tree as the Crown of Thorns at Glastonbury, where it took root—a symbolical story showing that faith in God is a living thing. The second told the tale of St. Alban, the protomartyr of Britain; and the third that of the Benedictine Monk Gregory, who saw the little blonde children offered for sale in the market place of Rome, and, touched by their helplessness, resolved at a future day to carry the gospel to England. As this scene was sponsored by my friend Madame Grouitch, the wife of the Serbian Minister, and as my own little Peter was one of the small Roman slaves, I naturally took a great interest in it, aside from the fact that it was in itself one of the most touchingly lovely that was presented. Two tiny white doves carried in a wicker cage by one of the children in this group fluttered, after they were released, down to the foot of the stage, and never left it during the entire pageant except to fly back and forth across it, adding a lovely touch of symbolism to the drama.

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Shortly after this picture came the first of the four interludes, showing the influence of religious thought on poetry, music, painting and drama, and, in this interlude of poetry, which I sponsored, I took the part of Queen Guinivere, as described by Tennyson in "The Idylls of the King," wearing a medieval costume of pink and silver, with long braids twisted with pearls, and a gauzy veil floating from a pearl coronet. There was some exquisite singing in this scene, by the little novice who comforted Guinivere in her trouble, and a wonderfully effective impersonation of Sir Galahad, "the stainless knight" dressed in shining armor and riding upon a white horse. Of course I was more than pleased at all the pleasant things that were said to me about this group, for I worked very hard to make it a success, but one of the most beautiful of all, I thought, was the picture of the Crusaders. A great company of soldiers, the red cross which was their insignia flaming across their silver armor, rode in and stood at attention while Richard Cœur de Lion, King of England, knelt to receive the blessing of his mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine, before starting out for the Holy Land. She was certainly one of the most regal figures I ever beheld, gorgeously attired in black velvet and ermine, with a towering headdress of cloth of gold, her long train of black and gold brocade carried by two tiny pages in gorgeous raiment, as she stood in the midst of the ladies of her court with shielded eyes until she had watched her warrior son out of sight, and then sinking on her knees in silent prayer for God's blessing on his task.

Sir Walter Raleigh, Christian explorer, acted as the natural "liaison officer" between the old and the new world; and then came the first communion at Jamestown, the baptism of Pocahontas (sponsored by Mrs. Woodrow Wilson, who is a descendant of hers, and rightly and tremendously proud of the fact); Pohick Church, Virginia, in Colonial Days—with General and Lady Washington arriving in a coach-and-four; the founding of St. Mary's School in North Carolina, the little pupils, in hoop skirts and pantalets, descending from a barouche that once belonged to Daniel Webster; and—coming up to the present day—a wonderful interlude showing our soldiers sleeping in No 238 Man's Land, while the miracle of the Christmas story was enacted for them by a band of traveling players

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presenting the angels, the shepherds, the wise men, and Mary and Joseph bending over the manger. Last of all, a bright light was thrown on the wooden cross standing on the little hill, and it was revealed surrounded by angels, while towards it walked all those who had taken part in the drama, their arms outstretched, led by a little child in a flowing white garment—"for a little child shall lead them." And when the hill, and the green field at its base, were completely covered by worshipers, they knelt and sang the doxology together, and it seemed as if their very souls were surging in the song; and then the dear voice of a young girl kneeling at the foot of the cross with the angels, dressed in snowy white, rang out, divinely sweet:

In the Cross of Christ I glory, Towering o'er the wrecks of time, All the light of sacred story,  
Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o'ertake me Hopes deceive and fears annoy, Never shall the cross  
forsake me, Lo! it glows with peace and joy.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure, By the cross are sanctified; Peace is there that  
knows no measure, Joys that through all time abide.

I have been out on my little balcony to get a breath of air before I finish this letter and say good night. 239 It is very hot, but there is a slight breeze from the south, the stars are out, and I can see the statue of Jeanne d'Arc that I love so shining in the moonlight in the park across the street. The Washington Monument, with a searchlight falling full upon it, glistens like snow against the soft dark sky. The dome of the Capitol is illuminated, and at the very top the special globe, which shows that the *Senate is in session*, is still burning. And it is midnight!

Well—I won't comment on it again.

With my dearest love, as ever,

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Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Pine Grove Farm, North Haverhill, N. H. September.

Dear Sally,

I cringed at the severity of your criticism of my “grammatical error” in using two titles at once to designate the same man, in my recent letter to Susan, as I am sure you hoped I would when you made it; nevertheless, I find a slight ray of comfort in the fact that, after all, I was following the rules of official usage in Washington, and that if I did not, I should be even more severely reprimanded there for my ignorance of etiquette than you have reprimanded me for my ignorance of the English language! The justices of the Supreme Court are always referred to as “Mr. Justice So-and-So,” and are always addressed simply, “Mr. Chief Justice” or “Mr. Justice” as the case may be, without the use of any name at all. This is customary in the case of most persons of high official rank—“Mr. President,” not “President Harding” or “Mr. Harding”; “Mr. Secretary,” not “Secretary Hughes” or “Mr. Hughes”; “Mr. Ambassador,” not “Ambassador Jusserand” or “Monsieur Jusserand,” are the forms employed in addressing all these personages. “Mr. Senator” is not obligatory, but it is often used, and even “Mr. Governor,” which you state that “*of course* any one would know better than to say,” is 241 an entirely correct and not uncommon term. Their wives, on the contrary, are called by their names exactly as any other woman would be. “Mrs. Coolidge, Lady Geddes, Mrs. Hoover,” and so on. I think you will find that in foreign countries the same customs prevail. “Monsieur le Président” and “Herr President” are certainly the forms used in France and Germany. Washington is undeniably becoming the great diplomatic center of the world, and this perhaps explains the fact that many “pomps and ceremonies” are observed there which do not prevail in other parts of the country. I daresay, for instance, that the question of precedence has never troubled you very much in Nebraska—it certainly never troubled me very much in New Hampshire! But in Washington woe be unto the woman who does not know whom

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she must place at her right hand at dinner, whom she must precede or follow in walking through a door, whom she must call upon before she is called upon herself—or—to go back to the very point which you raised—how she must address the men and women with whom she is brought in contact. There is even a certain fixed order in which the activities of officials appear in the social columns of the newspapers—those of the President and Mrs. Harding are described first, then those of the Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge, and so on down the list. It is considered so important that all this should be correctly done that there is a branch in the Department of State arranged on purpose to give the necessary information to bewildered hostesses and uninformed newcomers; and dinner parties have actually been disrupted because women who “did not know the ropes,” 242 and either failed to make inquiries or “thought it didn't matter,” placed their guests unsuitably. A good many of these customs may seem rather farfetched and undemocratic to you, I know, but there are real, though not always very apparent, reasons underlying all of them. And in our pride that our national Capital is developing into an international Capital, we must remember that since this is so we must be willing to observe international customs, in deference to the strangers within our gates. Not only do they expect us to regard these customs in respect to them; but they misunderstand us if we fail to do so in respect to our own public men. And this is often not only an undesirable, but a disastrous, impression for them to obtain.

Personally, I do not in the least resent observing the rules of precedence to the best of my ability; but I do very definitely wish that something could be done to relieve the tension, and lighten the burden, of the duties of the woman in official life. No one who has not been through the mill can have the faintest conception of the requirements and demands made upon her time and strength, which she does not feel free, for the sake of her husband's position, to decline to meet. The entire nation has held its breath in anxiety and dread this month because of Mrs. Harding's critical illness; the entire nation is now rejoicing that she is better. But I wonder how large a proportion realizes that she would probably never have been so ill if she had not given so unsparingly of herself to us all, in spite of a

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chronic ailment which has handicapped her for years? In a lesser, but still in a very great, degree, every ambassador's wife, every senator's wife, every Cabinet officer's wife, is expected to serve. We want to serve, of course—but not at the expense of our health and our family life, which, it seems to me, are not taken into consideration at all!

The second session of the weary Sixty-seventh Congress has come to an end at last; and of the two bills over which it has spent most of the summer, one has been passed and the other defeated. The Fordney Tariff Law, which has just gone into effect, after being before Congress over a year and eight months, is the sixth of its kind to be enacted within the last thirty-two years—following the McKinley Law, the Gorham-Wilson Law, the Dingley Law (which has been described as “the most satisfactory and successful tariff law ever in operation”) and the Underwood Law. The bonus bill, on the contrary, which has been defeated, after being before Congress for six months, is the first measure of the sort to be attempted. Unless you are very well up in Civil Government—I find many of us get a little rusty unless we *have* to keep informed—it may have puzzled you a little as to why, when the greater number of the members of both Houses voted for the bill, both before and after sending it to the President, it did not become a law even though he vetoed it. The reason is that it requires a *two-thirds* majority to “override” a President's veto, and though the House more than supplied this number, the Senate failed to do so by four votes, and the veto was therefore “sustained.” The bonus is probably one of the subjects on which you feel very strongly—I find that most women, as well as most men, do, and that you are, 244 therefore, either acclaiming or bewailing its defeat—I have no idea which. But I am going to ask you to remember that, like most other questions, it has two sides. The President says in his message about it, “With the avowed purpose of this bill . . . I am in accord, but to its provisions I do not subscribe. . . . In legislating for what it calls adjusted compensation Congress fails, first of all, to provide the revenue from which the bestowal is to be paid. Moreover, it establishes the very dangerous precedent of creating a treasury covenant to pay which puts a burden, variously estimated between four and five billion, upon the American people, not to discharge an obligation, which the Government must

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always pay, but to bestow a bonus which the soldiers themselves while serving did not expect.”

Here are some indisputable facts: Congress does not provide the means of revenue, and what is more, it cannot; and a government cannot overdraw its bank account very long, any more than an individual can, without getting into serious trouble. Taxes are already a terrific burden, and a burden which is not growing lighter. There is a difference between a debt and a gift. I recognize all this very clearly, and I respect the courage of the President in stating it—for it always does take courage to state unpleasant and unpopular facts like these. At the same time, I cannot help feeling, as I have often felt before, that while the Government cannot spend money which it does not possess, some way ought to be found to rearrange its budget to advantage. For instance, I have always thought—and frequently said—that it was poor economy—a poor economy which most other nations have the wisdom not to practice—to refuse government help to maternity and child-welfare work; that it was poor economy—another poor economy which other nations do not practice—to underpay public officials so that only men with independent means can afford to enter politics, when we ought to be able, for the good of the country, to command the services of the best men that there are, quite irrespective of whether they have private fortunes. And so, in like measure, it seems to me poor economy not to find some way of recognizing our obligation—for it seems to me that it is an obligation—more substantially than we have yet done, to the men who are maimed and blinded for life—and who were glad to take the chance of being made so—that the women and children of America should not undergo what the women and children of France and Belgium and Serbia underwent. I have seen too many of these men still in a very pitiable condition, I have heard too many people say that “they were tired of hearing about the war” to feel that our national conscience should be easy yet in regard to them, in spite of the fact that something—much even—is already being done. In a lesser, but still in a very marked degree, we have an obligation, not yet fully discharged either, to the men who gave up positions which furnished the necessary livelihood for themselves and their families, in

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order to serve in the War, whether they were ever wounded, whether they ever reached the front or not. The men who stayed at home—many of them—earned more than they ever did before in their lives. The men who went away earned less—and all too often found, on their return, that the promise of having their “old job 246 back” was not going to be kept. I cannot suggest the perfect panacea for these conditions—I wish I could!—but I refuse to try to pretend that they do not exist, or that they should not, if possible, be remedied. It seems to me that our government is something like a woman who has, let us say, a dress-allowance of five hundred dollars a year, and who persists in spending twenty-five dollars apiece for her hats, and a hundred dollars apiece for her dresses. She soon discovers that she has nothing at all left over for gloves and shoes and petticoats; that she is running into debt without being well-dressed—and certainly without a cent left over to give to charity—for it is not honest to give away money, no matter how worthy the object of the gift may be, if the milliner is not paid! But there are a great many women with no more than that to spend who always look dainty and stylish, but who start each month with a clean slate—and subscribe to milk funds, and pay their Red Cross dues, and put crisp bills into the contribution plate at church into the bargain! I've always thought that you were marvelously capable, Sally, in the way you handle your own personal finances—begin to think a little about how you, as an intelligent and interested voter, can help to straighten out those of the government.

There has been so much excitement over the bonus and the tariff, and so much relief that some definite steps have been taken in regard to both at last, that the passage of a bill in which many women have been deeply interested—the Curtis-Cable Bill relative to the naturalization and citizenship of married women—has taken place almost unnoticed—it was, in fact, one of 247 one hundred and sixty-seven unopposed measures which were rushed through in a single day. Until now an American woman marrying a foreigner forfeited her American citizenship, and became, automatically, a citizen of her husband's country; while a foreign woman marrying an American became automatically an American citizen. Under the provisions of the new bill an American woman marrying an alien will not



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lose her American citizenship unless she formally renounces it; and, inversely, no woman marrying a citizen of the United States is forced to become one herself. A woman cannot, however, be naturalized *after* marriage if her husband is not eligible to citizenship, unless she is separated from her husband. The League of Women Voters has worked particularly hard for the passage of this bill—though many other organizations of women have also advocated and urged it—and is, of course, overjoyed that it has taken place at last.

The adjournment of Congress has meant that congressional families could have a few weeks' vacation together, and it has meant a great deal to me to spend these wonderful fall days quietly at Pine Grove Farm, to have Harry and the boys all at home, and to catch glimpses of Mary and Sarah and Prue and the other girls whom I see so seldom now. I have had a chance, too, basking before my big open fireplace with its hanging crane, to think over the wonderful visit I made Elizabeth in California this summer unhurriedly, and digest, as it were, the details which I had no time, in the course of it, to think over carefully.

Before I left home, I was asked if I would serve, in my capacity as a member of the World Service Council, 248 as one of the hostesses at Asilomar on Monterey Bay, the only conference ground owned by the Young Women's Christian Association. I was especially glad to make an effort to do this, as it was not possible for the other senators' wives who are members of the council to attend, and as Asilomar owes its very existence to a woman who is still remembered—though a long time had passed since she left Washington—as one of the most remarkable women, both for her talents and her character, who ever came there as a senator's wife—Mrs. Phœbe Hearst. Seeing the value of the first experimental conferences that the great organization had held, to some of which she had paid the expenses of many of the delegates, she offered her own home and grounds, Hacienda del Pozo de Verona, as the setting for one, and prepared a “tented city” where more than three hundred women could be cared for, on her own estate. The tents, designed by her, were equipped with running hot and cold water and shower baths, with iron beds and soft, warm blankets; and she took care of fifty guests in her house—altogether a tremendous executive undertaking for a woman to plan and put through, and one which

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proved so successful in every way that she next instigated—and substantially assisted in—the purchase of a thirty-acre tract of land at Asilomar not far away as a permanent conference ground, donated to it all the portable equipment which she herself had used in her “tented city” and the big administration building and “social hall” which bears her name. And here, ever since, conferences for students, for teachers, for the community, have been held with results so far-reaching as to be 249 almost incalculable, for it is open to other organizations besides the Y. W. C. A. when that is not using it, as a meeting place, and more than five thousand persons used it last year.

So it was towards Asilomar that Elizabeth and I turned our footsteps, or, to be more exact, the headlights of Elizabeth's motor car, going over the most perfect roads I ever saw in my life—El Carmino Real, the King's Highway, and very rightly named for it is good enough for any king!—through a part of California which I should probably never have seen except for this invitation. We took four days en route and finally reached our destination, Asilomar, late in the afternoon, in time to see the great spreading sun going down in the west in a riot of glory across the sand-dunes and the foaming ocean, while, at the same time, a full moon hung like a round silver lamp in the darkening east.

Asilomar is a beautiful little settlement, directly on the coast, a memorial chapel, dedicated to Grace Dodge, the first President of the Y. W. C. A., a “visitors' lodge” and inn, a “health cottage”—isn't that an attractive name for a hospital?—and various other buildings, all constructed uniformly of the rough stone and redwood that blend so perfectly with the landscape, having been added to the original administration building and the famous tents; and I found myself speedily and heartily welcomed by the three hundred and fifty girls and women who were gathered there. That evening “The Doings of the Dollar,” the movie showing the work that is being done by the Y. W. C. A. all over the world, and how the money given to doing it 250 is being spent, was given for the benefit of the conference; and at the end there was a very beautiful tableau, of a girl leaning out of the Blue Triangle with a lighted candle in her hand, while the girls of all the countries, each in native costume, came and lighted their little tapers from hers, typifying the motto of

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the association, "I am come that they might have light, and that they might have it more abundantly."

The following afternoon came the big reception at social hall, following another showing of "The Doings of the Dollar," to both of which guests were invited from all over California, as well as many from outside, too, of course. The hostesses all discarded regulation camp costumes for their best bib and tucker, and every building was beautifully decorated with great bowls and jars of magnificent gladioli and multi-colored dahlias. I felt that I had never served tea under more lovely surroundings, and I found, as I seem so blessedly apt to do, a great many new friends, and some old ones, in a community where I had supposed I should be almost a total stranger.

My visit to Asilomar made me look forward with even newer delight than before to my visit to the Girls' Studio Club in Hollywood, which is also under the management of the Y. W. C. A. Of all the reports given at the convention of the World Service Council in New York City last fall none interested me so much as the one about this work. And I was consequently overjoyed at an invitation to go there, too. The Studio Club is a big, white house, set well back from the broad, palm-bordered avenue on which it stands, with tall pillars and a wide veranda—much more Virginian 251 than Californian in its appearance. Any girl who is working for the movies in any capacity is eligible to belong to it—and that means a great many more, remember, than the girls who act in the movies—it includes the girls working in the huge laboratories and wardrobe departments, "cutters" and scenario writers, and representatives of many other branches of the profession besides the actresses. I think we are rather apt to lose sight of the mechanical parts of a great plant, all absolutely necessary to its existence, and yet not much in evidence—in fact, rather skillfully kept in the background. Some of the best known of the big movie directors are on the board of the management of the club, and many of the "stars" belong to it; and though comparatively few of its members can live there, owing to lack of space, several hundred belong to it, and use and enjoy it as much as they can, the newcomers who arrive in Hollywood practically unknown and often with very little money finding there a warm welcome and an

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inexpensive, comfortable, and attractive abiding place, and forming ties of affection for it which often causes them to remain there long after these first hard conditions are past.

It was a very merry, attractive group that I found waiting to greet me when I arrived for the little dinner party given in my honor, and for the larger evening party that followed it—pretty, charming girls with tremendous vitality and splendid animation, some of them very successful, others temporarily, but cheerfully, “at leisure,” but all hopeful and happy and enthusiastic about their work. Some of them came early, their labors for the day finished, or because they had 252 further labors still ahead of them during the evening, and could snatch only a little while away—the lovely little creature who acts the part of Martha of Bethany in the famous Pilgrimage Play among the latter; some of them came late, because they had babies to put to bed before they could go out for the evening, and, having introduced young and friendly husbands, seemed to prefer to discuss the best methods of feeding infants and furnishing bungalows to anything else.

After this first introduction to movieland, I spent whole days going through the big studios; going to luncheon with Mr. and Mrs. Frank Borzage—the latter just then directing the filming of “The Pride of Palamar,” which he took me to see; going to a luncheon at the Writers' Club given to me by some of the prominent women writers of the screen—June Mathis, Frances Marion, a dozen or so others—brilliant, earnest women deeply interested in their profession; I had a morning with Harold Lloyd, who is delightful—possessing a fresh, wholesome personality, and a greater degree of good looks than is apparent on the stage; and finally a whole day with Mary Pickford. I lunched with her and her husband, Douglas Fairbanks, and found her to be very genuinely and simply the sweet and gracious little lady in real life that she is on the screen, and I understood not only why she is famous but why she is loved by thousands of women all over the country. In fact, not since I met Lady Astor have I felt so keenly that I was in the presence of a celebrity who was not overpraised, but who was even more charming than I dared to hope. The lunch, served in a little bungalow on the studio grounds, very 253 attractively but very simply furnished in Japanese lacquer, was just a “family party” of the kind that is conducive to “talking shop”

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in an intimate way, and we did talk shop, both of us, from the turnip salad with which the meal began—most people serve the salad first in California, instead of after the meat course, as we do in the east—through to the thick slices of luscious watermelon with which it ended. Then we walked over to the “sets” together, through the gorgeous medieval buildings that had been constructed for the filming of “Robin Hood” and finally to the little portable cottage where Mary Pickford lives much of the time, with its exquisite dressing room “done” in pale blue silk, and its equally exquisite tiled kitchen, frilled, too, in gayly neat chintz. And there I finally left her, a dainty little figure in her simple white dress and a wide white hat, standing in the door of her dainty little dwelling place, which framed her like the setting of a delicate picture, and urging me, as every one in that cordial country does, to “come and see her again soon.”

The entire Californian visit was a stimulating and splendid experience from start to finish, and the final days in San Francisco, with Mrs. Katherine Phillips Edson of the State Industrial Commission—one of the four women whom President Harding appointed on the Advisory Board of the Peace Conference last winter—and Mrs. Julius Kahn, the wife of Congressman Kahn, both acting as hostesses, were especially delightful. But no one event left, I believe, so vivid an impression upon me as the performance of the Pilgrimage Play which I saw—the beautiful story of the life of Christ 254 enacted on a five-acre tract of mountain-side among the hills of Hollywood—a setting strangely like Judea in many of its aspects. For three summers now the sylvan theater where it is given has been crowded to its full capacity night after night. I do not wonder—for it seems to me that in very truth America has an Oberammergau of its own now, and that a great spectacle is being shown, and a great message delivered, which all of us who can should see and hear. It is nonsectarian and noncommercialized in its auspices; the costumes, which, with infinite care and at tremendous expense, have been brought over from the Holy Land, are not only historically correct but aesthetically perfect. Every word spoken in the part of Christ is according to the Scriptures—not a syllable having been changed, and the general story has been based upon all four gospels, preference being given, where a slight

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difference in narrative occurs, to the one having the most dramatic value. There is great splendor of color and wealth of detail in all the episodes, and among the hundred and fifty persons in the presentation, there are some who interpret their parts very wonderfully—Mary, the Mother of Jesus, John the Beloved Disciple, Judas Iscariot, Mary Magdalene, and Herod. The actor who impersonates Jesus is very convincing, and very spiritual, with a rare beauty of face, voice and carriage; but he is essentially, from beginning to end, the “Man of Sorrows.” My own personal feeling is that Jesus was not that, for no one who is welcomed at feasts as well as at fasts, to whom little children go gladly, and who moves multitudes by his magnetism, is always grave; the grief which 255 could not be hidden or denied came, I believe, only towards the end. But the reverence and delicacy, no less than the skill with which the rôle is handled, are an inspiration; and I have been told that the actor, who was an unbeliever at the time that he began this work, has become a very devout Christian in the course of it. “To give beauty to ashes; the oil of joy for mourning; the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness,” this is the declared object of the men and women who have sponsored this undertaking. And I hope I can give you at least a small idea of how well they are succeeding in their purpose.

The play opened, after an organ prelude, with a prologue of prophecy in Bethlehem: high on the mountains, bathed in a deep violet light, was suddenly revealed an angelic figure, and, more slowly, there gathered together at the foot of the hills the trembling band of shepherds. “And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” The inspired voice had scarcely ceased when in the center of the stage we saw the Stable, the Manger surrounded by rays of glory, Mary bending over it with her illumined face, the watchful figure of Joseph, joined, before the picture faded, by the shepherds who had “come with haste,” and the Wise Men who had seen the Star and “rejoiced with exceeding great joy.” The glory of the Christmas message—not only that the birth of Christ was a holy thing, but that, through His coming, the birth of *every* child and the eternal miracle of motherhood have been made 256 sacred forever,

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has never seemed to me quite so vivid and so true as it has since I saw it presented before me among those silent hills, under that soft, summer sky.

All the scenes in the life of Christ were magnificently presented; but the ones which moved me most profoundly, nevertheless, because they seemed to touch every human life so closely, and because that touch, in this interpretation, became such a beautiful and living thing, were those laid in the Upper Chamber where the Last Supper was eaten, and in the Garden of Gethsemane, where, deserted by the friends who could not watch with Him one hour, Jesus poured out the anguish of His soul when He asked that, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The Last Supper, like the Nativity, has, it seems to me, a symbol that goes beyond even the privilege of the memorial service of communion—though that, of all the ceremonies of the church, means the most to me. I believe that on every gathering of family or friends taking food and drink together the spirit of Christ descends, making holy this commonplace and necessary thing—that this is the underlying cause of the fact that hospitality is sacred, and the reason why hospitality should never be abused—that it should never be tendered merely to pay off social debts, that it never should be accepted unless we like and admire and respect the persons who tender it to us. And the agony in the garden every one of us goes through sooner or later, and goes through alone, with our cry for help and rescue apparently unanswered. It is easy to say, "How fortunate and happy Mary is! She never has half the 257 troubles to bear that I do!" Or, "If I'd only planned my life in a different way, I wouldn't have had all this suffering—I could have escaped it." But if we know the secrets of Mary's soul—which usually we do not, because Mary is not a tattle-tale and a coward and a quitter, and it is only under very extraordinary circumstances that she reveals them—we find that she has gone through something quite as dreadful as we have, something that would, in fact, have been *more* dreadful for us, personally, to bear. And we cannot escape suffering by running away from it; it pursues us with flying feet, and overtakes us, and deals us a mighty blow when we attempt that; there are, as a matter of fact, no means by which we can escape it at all; but we can usually defeat it in a fair fight. Gethsemane is a reality for us all, and Calvary

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follows Gethsemane. But after Calvary comes Easter Day—and comes, remember, *only three days later*.

This was the note upon which the Pilgrimage Play closed—not with the picture of the heavy-laden sufferer bearing His Cross, but with the heavenly vision of the Resurrected Christ, and the words “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” And this, I think, is the greatest truth in the world. We begin with the miracle of birth; we end with the miracle of immortality; and at the beginning, at the end, and along the long hard road between, Christ is with us always if we look to find Him. In a general way there are, perhaps, certain rules that we must follow in our search. We cannot hope, of course, that every one we know will always think that we are doing right, and we must not allow ourselves to worry unduly even if they 258 do not; but if we are not doing right according to the best of our own belief and ability, if we are not at peace with our own consciences, if we are trying to compromise with our own standards of honor and integrity, we shall be hopelessly lost. If we cannot cleanse our hearts of “envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness,” if we cannot keep straight and square and serene, we make the journey much harder not only for the victims of our shortcomings but for ourselves; if we cannot believe in the magnificent power of prayer, the faith that will move mountains, those mountains take longer to climb; if we cannot bow to the omnipotence of love we forfeit the sweetest and most sacred thing granted to us on our pilgrimage. But aside from this, it does not matter, it seems to me, whether the way you take for your search is the same as mine or not. If we keep to them honestly they will both lead us to the same place in the end. It does not even matter very much if some of the people we know are not, as far as we can see, traveling on any very clearly marked highway towards any very definite goal—certainly not to the point of judging and condemning them—if they want our sympathy, our understanding, our help, we can give it, but that is all. “There are more roads than one to Heaven, perhaps more Heavens than one.” But Christ is everywhere—“even unto the end.”



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My dear love, as ever.

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. November.

Dear Lucy,

For the first time since I came to Washington, I have experienced the joy of having one of “the girls from home” visit me, and how great a delight it was to both of us you will never know until you follow Prue's example and spend a fortnight with me yourself. I didn't fully realize beforehand how widespread the spirit of cordiality is in the Capital, or how many avenues are open to special privileges and pleasures to a senator's wife entertaining a visitor.

The season has begun very early, and one of the most beautiful balls which I ever attended in my life was given this month. It took place under the auspices of the National Opera Company, which is striving so hard to remove from Washington the stigma of being alone among the great capitals of the world in having no national opera. The chandeliers in the ballroom of the Willard, where it was held, were covered with lanterns of blue and yellow silk, and between them hung long silken festoons of the same colors, while all round it floated pennants gay with heraldic designs. In front of each box a page was stationed, dressed in medieval costume, and carrying a bugle. At one end of the ballroom was a slightly raised dais, with a background of rich dull blue velvet curtains, and mammoth 260 candles in dull gold candlesticks standing on either side. About eleven o'clock the velvet curtains parted, and the “Spirit of Music,” a lovely, slender form robed in classic white, and carrying a lyre, stepped in front of them. She was followed by the “Spirit of the Dance”—the graceful faunlike figure of a man—who gave an exquisite solo performance on the cleared floor of the ballroom, and then took his place by her

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side. Next, as if invoked by these two spirits, the leading characters from almost every well-known opera appeared in turn; the orchestra played the familiar airs which should accompany them, as they took their places on either side of the "Spirit of Music" and the "Spirit of the Dance." "The Bohemian Girl" led the way; "Marguerite" gave the "Jewel Song" from "Faust"; "Samson and Delilah," wonderfully well interpreted, entered together; "Carmen" flashed past, wrapped in a gorgeous Spanish shawl; "Aïda" entered to the strains of the "Grand March"; "Pagliaccio" in his clown's white, and many others. Then, led by the "Spirit of Music," they formed a procession and marched down the ballroom, the bugler-heralds joining them as they advanced, the guests who were in costume following them—a beautiful sight, scintillating with life and color. The prettiest of all the wonderful dresses worn was, I thought, that of a "Snow Maiden," cut in Russian style, of pure white chiffon edged with white swansdown over white satin, the headdress and trimmings formed of ropes of pearls. But there were many others that were nearly as lovely, and the regulation evening clothes were almost as attractive as the fancy costumes.

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The occurrence of the month that is certainly of the greatest interest to women all over the country is the seating of Mrs. Felton of Georgia in the United States Senate. Legally, in the opinion of all consulted authorities, she had no right to the seat. She was appointed upon the death of Senator Watson in the early fall to fill his unexpired term, and her term ended when Senator George was elected on November 7. Had she been a man, she would unquestionably not have been seated; in fact, several men have been denied seats recently under similar conditions, among them one whom Harry appointed during his term as governor of New Hampshire, so that I had heard the whole question thoroughly discussed before. But I was not in the least surprised that not a single senator raised his voice against showing this courtesy—though one vote against her would have excluded her—to the "Grand Old Woman" who, because she is a woman, and a woman full of years and honor, was entitled to their especial consideration. You will remember, Lucy, that I have told you that applause is forbidden in the Senate gallery, but no effort was made to

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check the swelling tide of it that swept across it as she entered the chamber on Senator Harris's arm. She presented a lovely dignified figure, simply dressed in black silk trimmed with fine old lace, and crowned with the most magnificent wreath of snow-white hair that I ever beheld; and I, for one, am perfectly willing to confess to a fast-beating heart and overflowing eyes, and a sense of the dawn of a new era in politics.

The opening session was immediately adjourned out of respect to the memory of Senator Watson, as is the 262 custom as soon as the formal announcement of the death of a member of the Senate has been made; but the following day, after the joint session in the House of Representatives, when the President delivered in person his address on the ship subsidy bill, Mrs. Felton presented her credentials, and was immediately sworn in. Then the Chair—the presiding officer—“recognized her,” as the term goes, and she made a charming little speech, which consumed only about five minutes, but which made a wonderfully favorable impression upon all of us who heard it—for the senators' wives turned out in full force for this great occasion, you may be sure!

As soon as Mrs. Felton had completed her speech, Mr. George, who had purposely delayed presenting his credentials until then in order to give her this opportunity, presented them. They were accepted and Mrs. Felton ceased to be senator. But a new precedent had been established, and it will not be long now, I venture to predict, before another woman—or several—takes her place in the Senate. Meanwhile, I am supremely glad that to the South, often unjustly accused of ultra-conservatism as far as women are concerned, belongs the credit of first appointing one to that high position.

At the joint session, Mrs. Huck, the newly elected congresswoman from Illinois, shared the honors, congratulations, and display of public interest that were being showered upon Mrs. Felton; and the agreeable impression that she made upon me then was strengthened yesterday when I sat beside her at a luncheon given in her honor by the Women's National Press 263 Club. She has been elected to finish the term of her father, Mr. Mason, at one time senator and later representative, who died in office; and she has, I think, very

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deeply and sincerely the feeling that she has lifted a dropped torch, and that she must keep it burning clear and bright. As she represents the largest congressional district in the country, containing six and a half million persons, she has a great responsibility, as well as a great opportunity. She is an alert, erect little woman, extremely attractive to look at and entertaining to talk to, and if the short speech she gave yesterday about her campaign for office—throwing humorous as well as serious sidelights upon it—is any indication of what she is likely to do on the floor of the House, I should say that her chances of developing into a successful “spellbinder” were very good. In fact, she strikes me as entirely capable of filling her new position creditably without neglecting her four children in the least. I hope to know her better as the months go on.

I have also attended with the greatest interest this month the conferences which the National Woman's Party and the Consumers' League have held here, one immediately after the other. That both have the welfare of women sincerely and earnestly at heart, no thinking person who has taken the trouble to follow their work closely can possibly doubt. And yet they disagree so radically and entirely as to the best means of attaining the ends which both desire that the unprejudiced outsider, connected with neither, who wishes to help other women, and intends, if it eventually seems best to her, to ally herself with some organization interested in this, is likely to feel very much bewildered and confused, and possibly not a little distressed. I am forced to confess myself no exception to this rule, and I can only give you, as honestly as possible, my personal reaction to the two conventions, without venturing to say that yours would have been the same if you had attended them.

The proposed amendment to the Constitution was drafted by the National Woman's Party, provisionally, to read,

“Section I. No political, civil or legal discriminations on account of sex, or on account of marriage unless applying to both sexes, shall exist within the United States or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

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“Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.”

The “blanket bill” to be introduced into the state legislatures stated,

“Women shall have the same rights and privileges under the law as men.” The Consumers' League objected at the very outset to the word “same” in this sentence, feeling that it, in itself, if passed, would do away with much protective legislation, giving women *extra* rights and privileges which they need and which men do not; and objected still more to certain clauses which followed this statement, declaring that women should have “freedom of contract”—invalidating the compulsory eight-hour day and minimum wage for women; “immunities or penalties for sex offenses”—endangering penalties for seduction and rape which apply to men only; and the final and all-embracing 265 clause—“and in all other respects”—which might be construed to mean almost anything.

At the opening session of the convention of the National Woman's Party Mrs. Belmont, the president, read the new “Declaration of Principles,” which the organization has now adopted as its working plan. Miss Alice Paul, the vice president, pointed out that the three most important planks in it were: (1) the new standard between husband and wife; (2) the new ideal as to the support of wife and family; (3) the statement calling for equality of opportunity in the economic field between men and women. I wish I had space to quote this declaration in full; but though that is impossible, I will show you what seems to me some of the “high spots”—either because I agree with them, or because I do not.

“Be it resolved . . . that women shall no longer be regarded and shall no longer regard themselves as inferior to men, but the equality of the sexes shall be recognized. . . .

“That women shall no longer be barred from any occupation, but every occupation open to men shall be open to women, and restrictions upon the hours, conditions, and remuneration of labor shall apply alike to both sexes.”

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I might as well confess very frankly, Lucy, that it never occurred to me to regard myself as inferior to a man, and that I have never known a woman who did. On the other hand, women are certainly different from men, and I liked very much what one of the doctors 266 who was a delegate to the convention had to say in this respect. "Biologically and physiologically there is a difference (between the sexes). . . . An example which indicates that such a difference exists is the dissimilar effect produced in men and women by the excessive use of alcohol. . . . It may eventually be revealed that each sex has a fitness for certain kinds of action; not necessarily that women are inferior to men, in fact, they may be superior. Woman probably has certain mental and physical attributes which eminently fit her for certain work."

I felt that Dr. O'Malley was absolutely right. We cannot get away from the fundamental biological difference of sex, and she might have added to her illustration about alcoholism the fact that while paternity involves no drain at all, maternity involves a very great one, and that if this drain is disregarded, we at once establish a menace not only to women but to all posterity. This being so, the second statement which I have read to you from the Declaration of Principles seems to me fraught with danger, for there are certainly occupations absolutely suitable for a man to pursue which are intrinsically injurious to a woman.

On the other hand, standing out among a number of declarations which are not of vital importance to the great majority of women, in either one way or another, here are some with which it seems to me no intelligent person can possibly quarrel, or even disagree.

"That women shall no longer be denied equal educational opportunities with men, but the same opportunities 267 shall be given to both sexes in all schools, colleges, and universities which are supported in any way by public funds."

"That a double moral standard shall no longer exist, but one shall exist for men and women."

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“That the wife shall no longer be considered as supported by the husband, but that their mutual contribution to the family maintenance shall be recognized.”

“That the husband shall no longer own his wife's services, but that these shall belong to her as to any free person.”

“That the husband shall no longer control his wife's earnings, but that these shall belong to her alone.”

“That the husband shall no longer own or control his wife's property, but it shall belong to her and be controlled by her alone.”

In other words, Lucy, that a woman, married as well as single, has the same right to economic independence as a man, that her service in taking care of a house and bringing up children has a cash value, and that outside earnings are no more her husband's than his are hers.

“That the husband shall no longer obtain divorce more easily than the wife, but the wife shall have the 268 right to obtain divorce on the same grounds as the husband.”

“That the father shall no longer have the paramount right to the care, custody, and control of the child, to determine its education and religion, to the guardianship of its estate, and the control of its services and earnings, but that these rights shall be shared equally with the father and mother in the case of all children, whether born with or without the marriage ceremony.”

On the evening of the same day when this “Declaration of Principles” was adopted, Mrs. Belmont gave a beautiful dinner to the delegates at the Willard, and with the kindness and cordiality which the organization has always shown to me, I was invited, and delightfully placed at the Speaker's end, between the Reverend Olympia Brown, the aged woman who was the first minister of her sex in this country, and Dr. Gilette Hayden, a pioneer among

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women dentists, and one of the national vice chairmen. The huge table, in the form of an open square, was magnificently decorated with purple, yellow, and white flowers—the party colors—the menu was perfect, and I do not think I have ever seen so large a group of women who were so uniformly handsome and elegantly dressed; and the speeches which followed the dinner were of the highest order, so far surpassing those usually given on such occasions in their display of intellect and literary powers, that they made a deep impression upon me. Mrs. Robert Goelet of New York, a vision of loveliness in black velvet and pearls, brought greetings 269 from the women of Italy, her native country. Madame Cobina, one of the founders, and a prima donna of the Monte Carlo Opera Company, sang divinely. Miss Emma Gillett, dean of the Washington College of Law, called attention to the research work of the National Woman's Party. Her opinion—"the most important constructive piece of work ever undertaken by any group of women"—I heartily agree with her, for the pamphlets, "How state laws discriminate against women," giving, state by state, in brief and concise form, the statutes that are to her disadvantage; and the more recent compilations, showing which states have the *best* laws, in certain specific respects, for women—Oregon on divorce, Mississippi on guardianship, North Dakota on illegitimacy, etc.—seem to me invaluable, and should be consulted by women everywhere. There were, however, two classes of women entirely unrepresented among the speakers—women in agriculture and women in industry. This omission seemed to me a grave one, since of all classes these two, who work the hardest, and often suffer and sometimes die because of the severity of their labors, and not the highly trained, highly cultured and highly educated professional women, are to be the first and most vitally affected by improved conditions for women. I do not know whether their absence was due to the fact that they were not invited, or that they did not wish to come; but either reason would seem to me about equally lamentable.

The impressions made upon me by the sessions of the convention of the Consumers League which I 270 attended were entirely different. The speeches which followed their banquet at Rauschers' were almost exclusively on the subject of child labor, and both



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Mrs. Blair and Mrs. Upton, the Democratic and Republican national chairmen, joined with Mrs. Kelley, the secretary of the Consumers' League, in backing a Federal amendment on this question. The first afternoon session was given over to a work conference, and the discussions centered upon minimum wage. Miss Elizabeth Brandeis, the daughter of Associate Justice Brandeis of the Supreme Court, who is one of the best friends that labor has had in this country, and herself the secretary of the Minimum Wage Board in the District of Columbia, contributed a most valuable paper on this subject—the eight-hour day, and prohibition of night work. This was followed by an account of “How the Public can help the Woman's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor” by Mary Anderson, that sweet, strong, and serene woman who has worked herself up from the humblest surroundings to the position of chief in this great Government office. The evening session was a conference on what “Women want and cannot have with blanket equality,” Miss Julia Lathrop, the former head of the Children's Bureau, presiding and delegates from fifteen different women's organizations pronouncing against the bill. Florence Kelley is a brilliant speaker, amazingly quick and keen; Julia Lathrop, and Ethel Smith, the legislative secretary of the Women's National Trade Union League, are forceful and excellent ones. But aside from these, there was no extraordinary display of eloquence and polish; there were no elegant dresses, no 271 signs of wealth; but every one of these women who spoke had some reason based on personal experience, why she did not want the blanket bill to pass, and stated it with a clearness and a sincerity that, to me at least, was overwhelmingly convincing. I wish you could have heard them all; but I am quoting to you parts of some that seemed to me especially convincing.

“I am at present employed in a mercantile establishment and have been so employed for several years prior to the enactment of the eight-hour day and the minimum-wage laws. I am, therefore, in a position fully to realize just what women in industry will lose through blanket equality. I haven't forgotten the hardships of working ten or more hours a day, the dread of the Christmas season, when I was required to work from eight A. M. to ten or eleven P. M., with such short periods for lunch and supper that I had scarcely

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time to eat, and no time for the rest that every muscle in my body ached for. Nor have I forgotten the struggles of the women with whom I worked, trying to get along on pitifully inadequate wages. These past conditions are very vivid in my mind, so vivid in fact that I can't understand why any thinking, wage-earning woman would not oppose any law that would tend to the return of such conditions.

“If such a law passed saying in effect that no legislation should be obtained unless it applied to both sexes, who should say that maternity laws and widows' pensions should remain on the statute books? Do men need maternity laws?

“The blanket equality legislation would tie men and women together. It would abrogate the working woman's independence, destroy her laws, and compel her to accept the identical methods and policies that men have, whether she liked them or not, whether they were feasible or good for her or not, whether they were necessary or not. It is just as illogical, tyrannical and reactionary as it would have been to force equal suffrage by taking the vote away from men.

“It is a significant fact that the eight and a half million women in industry, the ones who would be most directly affected, are, through their organizations, strenuously opposing blanket legislation. It is these women who would pay for it, not the successful professional woman, the highly paid office manager, the exceptional secretary, but the woman in never-too-well-paid industry, the woman whose earnings at best keep her only a little above the safety line. Blanket legislation with its inevitable disturbance of minimum-wage law means a heart-sickening thing to the woman whose wages are never more than a tiny margin above the minimum. The annulment of mothers' pensions laws means despair to the widow working her best to keep her little family together. . . . The girl in the department store—what does she think of the scheme to sweep her rest chair away with the flapping corner of blanket legislation?”

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These are hard facts, Lucy—facts that you and I have never been called upon to face ourselves, thank God! But shall we refuse to face them for the sake of the woman who must?

This is Thanksgiving Day, and I have just come home from hearing the Pan-American mass, given in honor of the representatives of South and Central 273 American countries, and one of the most famous of annual services here, celebrated at St. Patrick's Church. I do not think that any woman who is not herself a member of the Roman Church—who is, indeed, a devoted member of another communion—appreciates the great significance and richness of many of its services more than I do, and I was delighted when Senator Walsh of Montana invited me to go to this one with him. It was a beautiful spectacle. For a block on either side of the church students from St. John's College stood at attention along the sidewalk, and flanked either side of the awning that stretched from the curb to the steps. Inside the church, every pillar was wrapped with our American flag, while the flags of two Pan-American countries, gracefully draped, hung from either side of the pillar. The top of every pew on the center aisle was surmounted by a flag, ours on the pews reserved for the members of the Supreme Court, the Senate, and the Army and Navy, who had been invited, the others with those of the Pan-American countries; while under each flag was fastened the corresponding coat of arms. As soon as the service had begun, the student officers, with unsheathed swords, took their places beside these pews, standing erect; and at the beginning and end of the mass there was a presentation of arms and “the colors.” The music, rendered by two choirs, was divinely lovely. The sermon, with Paul's pride in his Roman citizenship, and the privileges and responsibilities which it gave him, as a text, dwelt on the still greater privileges and responsibilities which the citizens 274 of all American countries possess, and the thankfulness which we should all feel for them.

I *do* feel grateful for it, and for many other things—increasingly thankful as time goes on. I never wake in the morning, for instance, without a conscious feeling of thankfulness that I am well, that I can get up and work and play as much as I want to, after so many years

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of invalidism when I could do nothing at all; I can't seem to get used to it, to take it as a matter of course. I can't seem to take the joy of children as a matter of course, either, for life would not have been worth living for me without them. Two tousled heads near me, bent close together over some rare specimens for their stamp collection, just given their owners by the Serbian Minister, are reminding me poignantly at this very minute of two other causes for gratitude. I am thankful for a home, not merely a crowded, rented cubicle, but a dwelling place where my ancestors have lived before me, and where—I hope—my descendants will live after me; a house for which I have hemmed the curtains and embroidered the towels, and collected the books and pictures myself. But most of all, in view of the way in which I have spent so much of the month, I am thankful for the men I have known. This is such a terribly old-fashioned sentiment, that I hardly dare give voice to it; but perhaps it is time that some one spoke a few words in defense of man, who is nowadays rather neglected, and I am glad to do it. Let us be just. The laws which “discriminate against women” were not originally framed to do this. They were framed to relieve women of responsibility, to defend them from a struggle with conditions which 275 would have been hard for them, to shelter and protect them. They have been abused, of course, sadly abused, sometimes; and we have certainly outgrown them. Men have been slow to admit it—but that, again, was because the fostered woman was their ideal, and they could not seem to realize that the fostered woman was, in reality, often a hampered or persecuted one. Now they are beginning to understand this as well as women, and will not refuse, I believe, to try to correct the unfair laws. Not having led a particularly restricted or secluded life, I have, of course, known some men whose private lives and public careers did not fill me with admiration and respect; but, taking them by and large, I have found them decent, kindly, honest and honorable, and there are few whom I have known well who do not make me feel the better for having known them. I have infinite faith in mankind, as well as in womankind.

I am supremely thankful that this is so!

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Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. December.

Dear Elsie,

When I was a little girl I always hated to have any one ask me what my favorite color was; I usually began by replying that it was pink, and then shifted to pale blue, and as an after-thought considered yellow, lavender, and Nile green. It was the same way with desserts; ice cream seemed a safe enough answer until I remembered chocolate blanc-mange and lemon pie. The truth was, being a child who immensely enjoyed life and all that it held for me, that I liked *all* colors and *all* desserts. Now, when you ask me what I like best in Washington, I am in much the same predicament. So you will have to guess, if you can, from my letter!

With the beautiful Pan-American mass of Thanksgiving Day still very fresh in my mind, I went, on the fourth of December, to the first session of the Pan-American Conference which has been meeting here at the call of Secretary Hughes. It was the first time that I had ever seen the magnificent "Hall of the Americas" in the Pan-American building turned over to business—and a very important business—instead of to a reception; and the group of three hundred persons who were gathered there, by invitation, to listen to the plans for coöperation and consolidation of interests 277 between Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica, were in an earnest, rather than a merrymaking, mood. I do not believe there was a single man or woman present who did not consciously rejoice at this time, when so many of the nations of the eastern hemisphere are at each others' throats, that those of the western hemisphere are constantly progressing towards a better understanding and a friendlier relationship, and that the United States is privileged to play host to guests who respect and admire both our country and each other's. The

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Secretary of State, in his address of welcome, outlined our position in his usual graceful and comprehensive way.

“The government of the United States has no ambition to gratify at your expense; no policy which runs counter to your national aspirations; and no purposes save those to promote the interests of peace and to assist you, in such manner as you may welcome, to solve your problems to your own proper advantage. The interest of the United States is found in the peace of this hemisphere, and in the conservation of your interests.”

That same evening, the Secretary and Mrs. Hughes gave a magnificent reception in honor of the delegates to the conference, and the beautiful building resumed its gala appearance. In the entrance hall six handsome marines dressed in splendid uniforms stood bearing flags, one the Stars and Stripes, and the other five the flags of the Central American countries represented at the conference. The same colors were repeated in the decorations of the stair landing and the patio, with 278 its cool, foaming fountain in the center bubbling over colored lights placed underneath its placid pool, and great clusters of white chrysanthemums and ferns among its palms. The Marine Band, scarlet coated, was playing in the gallery at the right of the grand staircase, and the long receiving line, as usual, stood just inside the entrance to the “Hall of the Americas”—its glittering chandeliers and simple columns, and glimpses, through the long windows at one side of it, into the Aztec garden in the rear, flooded with soft, dull blue light. I was impressed anew at the charm and loveliness of the Spanish-American women, as represented by the wives of the delegates, for they were all beautiful, exquisitely dressed, and entirely capable of greeting the three thousand guests in perfect English. I could not help wondering, with some apprehension, how many of us could look and speak as well if we were suddenly called upon to receive at a similar function in Honduras or Costa Rica!

Following hard upon the arrival of the delegates from Central America came the famous “Tiger,” Georges Clemenceau, the former War Premier of France, to plead his country's cause before us. He came unofficially, but I think he made an even more favorable

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impression, if possible, than if he had been sent by his government, for it placed his sincerity and his devotion to his cause absolutely above suspicion. He is a little bit of a man, over eighty years old, and yet as charged with vitality as if he had an electric battery inside of him, rather hunched and shriveled, and yet extremely merry; and he never appeared without having his hands firmly incased in a pair of gray 279 mocha gloves. (Of course there were all sorts of speculation as to why he did this, and I loved the answer which he himself gave—"I wear them because my hands get cold, but my feet never do!") He, too, speaks absolutely perfect English, and I was again very fortunate in being invited to meet him, and to hear his principal address, which he gave in Continental Hall the last day he was here. One newspaper for which I have great respect described this speech as "a delicately worded invitation to the United States to call the great powers to a new world conference where a new League of Nations, acceptable to the Government and yet capable of insuring permanent peace, might be framed." It seemed to me, however, to be neither that, nor a plea for imperialism, nor an excuse for militarism, nor even a veiled appeal for help, financial or otherwise; but merely an honest and convincing explanation of the attitude of present-day France, which is, Heaven knows, sufficiently misunderstood to need such an explanation. You live in the open country, Elsie, where your small Kenneth has every chance to be healthy; but suppose you had for a next-door neighbor a filthy family who had contracted some loathsome disease, which your child caught, and from which it nearly died. When it recovered, very much weakened, suppose this same thing happened for a second time. If it were in your power to prevent it, would you risk having it happen a third time? I do not believe so. I think you would find some way to protect yourself and your child against such a neighbor as a dangerous menace and that you would take whatever means lay within your power to do it. I do not 280 think you would invite the neighbor's children over to play, or even allow them if they tried to come. If your doctor's bills for your child's illness were very large, you would have to borrow money from some friend or some bank to pay them—you could not let your child die from lack of care. It might take you some time to pay that money back, no matter how much you wished

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to pay it promptly. Isn't that so? Well, that is what, worded a little differently, Monsieur Clemenceau tried to tell us about France.

“You have the best frontiers in the world. You know that Canada is not going to fight against you, and you know that Mexico can't, and you have the two oceans, one on each side of you. It is another thing, that, than the Rhine, which is a narrow strip of water. . . .

“During the war we were fighting, and before you had begun to fight we were spending lavishly of our blood and our gold. We had given of our blood, we had given of our gold. And with your great good help we won the day. In the meantime, however, we had been obliged to borrow money from America— *to spend in America's markets*. [The italics are my own.] That is the case of our debt to you. That debt we owe—we do not overlook it but don't you understand that under the conditions I have described, unless Germany pays us, and unless Germany is allowed to pay us, what can we do? . . . .

“I have but one message, only one message. It is the plainest that can be conceived. Peace, peace for all men. I do not ask for money, I do not ask for protection, I do not ask for help. I ask for nothing but 281 friendship and good heart and good will. My message is peace, peace by any means. . . . Our country has its soldiers, but we do not like to keep them; we do not like to see our young men in the ranks when they ought to be in the workshops and in the bureaus. We would be very glad to disband these young men. We are not a militaristic nation. But for fifty years we have been suffering the results of a hard peace, and for fifty years we have heard William Second speak of us and his dry powder. . . .”

It is a far cry from Continental Hall in Washington to-day to a secluded rectory in rural England seventy years ago, but as I sat listening to the “Tiger,” I could not help thinking of that great clergyman of the Anglican Church—the author, by the way, of that beautiful hymn, “Lead, Kindly Light”—who entered the Church of Rome, and became the celebrated Cardinal Newman; how he was vilified and persecuted for following the dictates of his



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conscience; and how finally, stung to desperation, he wrote the wonderful book called *Apologia pro Vita sua* (The Apology for his Life) which not only silenced but shamed his critics, and which is still a vital message now that both he and they are dead. Long after Clemenceau and the present-day detractors of France have ceased to speak, I believe that the memory of this message he has brought to America, this explanation, this “apology” if you like to call it so, will be treasured and heeded.

If Clemenceau's address gave me food for thought—and it certainly did—the two which President Harding has recently delivered at joint sessions in the House of Representatives, one at the opening of 282 the special session and one at the opening of the regular session of Congress, have given me even more. He looked dreadfully tired, much older, much more shadowed with care, than a year ago, and his voice sounded weary, too. I felt that the “heat and burden of the day” which come with mid-administration, and which are so much harder to bear than the flush of victory which comes at the beginning, and the sense of fulfillment which comes at the end, were telling heavily upon him. But he never spoke more magnificently, and what he said was never received with more enthusiasm, by an audience that packed the House to its doors, and stood in rows three deep about its walls and on its stairways. You have probably read his statement in regard to child labor. “Twice Congress has attempted the correction of the evils incident to child labor. The decision of the Supreme Court has put this problem outside the proper domain of Federal regulation until the Constitution is so amended as to give Congress indubitable authority. I recommend the submission of such an amendment. We have two schools of thought relating to amendment of the Constitution. One need not be committed to the belief that amendment is weakening the fundamental law or that excessive amendment is essential to meet every ephemeral whim. We ought to amend to meet the demands of the people when sanctioned by deliberate public opinion.”

I rejoiced over this part of his speech for two reasons: partly because, of course, I would like to see the condition of children, especially poor and unfortunate children, better than it is at present; and partly because 283 I am not in the least afraid of carefully thought-

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out amendments to the Constitution. No one would say that a child ten years old ought to wear the same coat that he did when he was two, because the coat was suitable and comfortable for him then; and the United States has expanded in a good many ways in the years that have elapsed since the Constitution was written. I once heard some one say something about “tampering with the Constitution” in the presence of Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton, the chairman of the Woman's National Republican Committee, and I shall never forget the dry and delightful way in which she replied that the last two pieces of tampering—the amendments for equal suffrage and prohibition—had not been of such a character as to frighten her away from a third dealing with child labor!

I am no more afraid of government help for private or semiprivate enterprise than I am of constitutional amendments; and I, therefore, believe very thoroughly in President Harding's plan for a ship subsidy—very unfortunately named—which was another topic which he brought up at this time, and about which I am afraid you may not be so well informed as you are about child labor. Highly as I approve of all the legislation “of special interest to women”—which has so far been passed or contemplated I sometimes think we lay too much stress upon it in our minds to the exclusion of general legislation, which affects women exactly as much as it does men, though sometimes more indirectly, and they should know enough about it to support it if it is good and work against it if it is bad I The plea that “they do not understand it” is a very weak one. 284 In nine cases out of ten they can understand it if they will make a conscientious effort to do so, and in the tenth case they can usually find some one who will explain it to them, either on paper or through the press. I am appalled at the number of women who tell me, without apology and often with a kind of pride, that they “never read the papers.” A school-teacher told me once during the World War that she was so occupied with the study of the American Revolution that she had not looked inside a newspaper in four months! Every woman should read two newspapers a day at least if she lives in the country: her local newspaper, and one big metropolitan newspaper which will give her reliable world news and thoughtful and

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intelligent editorials; and in addition to these, she should read some weekly review of current events.

As a matter of fact, the question of the ship subsidy is far from being an especially involved one. During the war, our government spent about four billion dollars for ships, and now owns fourteen hundred steel steamers. Through the Shipping Board, the government is at present operating about four hundred of these steamers, and is losing about fifty million dollars a year in the process. The rest of the vessels are standing idle, like uninvested money, and are of course deteriorating rapidly; no new ships are being built, and no repairs are being made on the ships that are in use. Since these do not suffice in number for trade purposes, much of our merchandise for foreign ports is now perforce carried in foreign vessels. The ship subsidy is designed to induce private individuals—Americans—who cannot afford without government aid to undertake this enterprise—because they cannot compete with the low wages paid for foreign labor—to buy and run the Shipping Board vessels, which would itself then automatically cease to exist. This would cost, it is estimated, about fifteen million a year—a saving of thirty-five million on what we are spending with the present inadequate arrangement.

“We are not now dealing with a policy founded on theory; we have a problem which is one of grim actuality,” President Harding said in his speech on this subject. “We are facing insistent conditions out of which will come either additional and staggering government losses and national impotence on the seas, or else the unfurling of the flag on a great American merchant marine commensurate with our commercial importance, to serve as carrier of our cargoes in peace and to meet the necessities of our defense in war. . . . Then the supreme humiliation, the admission that the United States is incapable of asserting itself in the peace triumphs of the world. It would seem to me doubly humiliating when we own the ships and fail in the genius and capacity to turn their prows toward the markets of the world. . . . Three courses of action are possible, and the choice among them is no longer to be avoided. The first is constructive the second is obstructive . . . the third is destructive. It is unbelievable that the American people or the Congress which

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expresses their power will consent to surrender and destruction. . . . I have come to urge the constructive alternative, to reassert an American 'I will.'”

It is very quiet here this afternoon. The big boys 286 have gone to a tea dance at the Congressional Club; Peter is playing contentedly beside me with an aquarium of goldfish sent him for a Christmas present by the National Fish and Game Commissioner. If I could not be a senator's wife, living in Washington, I should certainly like to be a senator's son or daughter home for the holidays, for an immense amount of entertaining is done to give the youngsters a good time, and this month we have had two débutantes in the senatorial circle—a rare event for one season—Miss Margaret Sutherland, the daughter of Senator Sutherland of West Virginia, and Miss Emily Dial, the daughter of Senator Dial of South Carolina, who “came out” looking as pretty as pinks, standing in the bowers of roses that surrounded them at the receptions given in their honor. But I think the “best fun” of all the recent parties was the one recently given by Mrs. Henderson, the widow of a former senator from Missouri, and one of the founders of the Congressional Club—a wonderful old lady who is my next-door neighbor, of whom I have written you before. The party was held at a beautiful new house she has just built, and was in honor of the members of the Congressional Club and the Ladies of the Senate, who were privileged to bring their husbands and children. Again I thought of the old-fashioned “cousin parties” with guests of all ages that we used to have in the Connecticut Valley. Great blazing yule logs were burning in the big fireplaces all over the house, and the huge table in the paneled dining room was laden with all sorts of old-fashioned “goodies”; while in the cream and white ballroom, lighted from its domed ceiling, all 287 sorts of old-fashioned dances were taking place to the tune of “Money Musk,” “Pop Goes the Weasel,” “Charlie, He's a Nice Young Man,” and so on. But the real “feature” of the evening was the “grand march,” which gradually grew more and more lively, and finally developed into a cakewalk and two or three sets of the Virginia Reel; this march was led by Mrs. Coolidge, who “stepped out” with Mrs. Henderson's son; after them followed Mrs. Henderson on the arm of the French Ambassador, Monsieur Jusserand; Madame Jusserand with the Ambassador from Peru,

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Monsieur Pezet; and so on, straight down the diplomatic and congressional list to the boys and girls of both circles, while Mr. Chalmers, the representative from Ohio, “called the numbers” with great gusto and spirit.

Of course there have been lots of other Christmas parties, too, among them a wonderful dinner given by Senator and Mrs. Stanfield of Oregon, where our place cards were tiny Santa Clauses and our nuts were in little green net bags, and our dessert, individual plum-pudding instead of the traditional ice cream, while great mounds of scarlet poinsettias and white chrysanthemums ran the entire length of the big table. But, perhaps because I *am* a little old-fashioned, I never plan my Christmas festivities without leaving some time—a good deal of time for religious observances. So on Christmas Eve we all went to service at the Church of the Ascension, which was a reproduction, in as far as possible, of the old Candlemas services of the Church of England in the early days. The church was lighted entirely by candles, and the mere- 288 of the vested choir, as they came quietly up the center aisle, each carried a lighted candle which they placed before them on racks fastened in front of their seats when they took their choir-places. They sang, one after another, the beautiful old carols which we all love, to the accompaniment of organ, harp, and stringed instruments, while the star of Bethlehem, clear and steady, hung high over the flickering lights on the altar, and the fragrance of the Christmas evergreen filled the building.

Oh, Holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend on us, we pray, Wipe out our sin and enter in, Be born in us this day. . . .

It will be long after Christmas before this letter reaches you, but there is no danger that this petition will be out of date: it is the everlasting prayer for Christmas—and for every day in the year—for the centuries that are gone, and the centuries that are to come; for you in your sheltered little Vermont village, and for me in this great world-city of Washington. I send it to you with my dear love, as ever, and the hope that I have shared with you, in some degree, what I have liked the best, because that is what friends are for.

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Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. January.

Dear Alice,

“The height of the season!” Is there any place in the world to-day, I wonder, where that phrase means so much that is interesting and important and thrilling, as it does in Washington? The mere external aspects of the city are throbbing with something different and more wonderful, to me at least, than any other which I have known. F Street in the morning, with its gay shop windows full of glittering evening frocks, gauzy fans, and lace scarves; its row of movie theaters with their twinkling electric lights competing with the cold, clean, winter sunshine; its famous candy stores, with their tempting fragrance of chocolate stealing out through the swinging doors; its big hotels looming up to the clear sky, grim and massive. The Speedway at noon, almost deserted, a few wild ducks fluttering across the gray river; the amphitheater at Arlington standing out like a snow-white crown among the bare trees on the Virginia side, the Lincoln Memorial reflected in its quiet pool, as unruffled as a sheet of glass; upper Sixteenth Street at twilight, rosy lights shining through the exquisite filet lace curtains of the Spanish Embassy—curtains which its lovely mistress made herself—from the red drawing-room of the Swiss Legation next door. Through 290 the grilled-iron entrance and down the graceful, low-stepped marble staircase of the home of the representative of France just below, go a stream of callers—women in furs and velvet and satin, men in frock coats and gorgeous uniforms—passing from one house to another, their polished limousines, flashing small red signals behind them, crowding Meridian Hill. The bronze statue of Jeanne d'Arc with her uplifted sword looks calmly down on it all from her lofty station in the park beyond. The shining dome of the Capitol at night, illumined from some invisible source, rounded and strong and still, towers over the seething station, with its constant stream of traveling humanity, coming

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and going, at its base. . . . I love it all, and thrill with it all, in sheer joy of being a tiny part of it.

Even better, if possible, I love the more intimate aspects of Washington at the height of the season; the daily interchange of greeting and ideas; the daily contact with men and women from all over the world who have been sent here because their state or their country felt that they were the very best it had to offer, and were glad to be represented by them here. Such a humdrum thing as opening the morning mail, or, later during the day, the stiff, square envelopes delivered by hand—as all formal invitations are here—becomes almost as much fun as tearing apart a “prize package” at a church fair used to be when we were children. You don't know what it is going to contain, but, almost inevitably, it is something that will make you—to continue the simile—put on the pink tissue paper cap that was wrapped around the prize package, and show it to the little girl who lived next door! 291 And to do the things that the prize packet had made possible: to go to a luncheon given by Mrs. France, the wife of the senator from Maryland, where tall, feathery, pale green Australian ferns, in jardinières covered with mossy bark, rose above the sprays of narcissi, roses, lilacs and spiræ, sent from the White House, with which the table was scattered, and a gilt basket filled with roses—palest pink roses adorned with a sky-blue gauze bow, alternating with deep pink roses adorned with a pink gauze bow—stood at the plate of every one of the fifty guests. The luncheon began with Hamburg grapes, seeded and sweetened, resting in glass cups on beds of shredded ice, and ended with baskets made of vanilla ice cream, filled with fresh strawberries, and supported by candy handles. (Mrs. Frelinghuysen, who sat by me, gazed from her basket of flowers to her basket of ice cream, and wittily remarked that this kind of a “basket lunch” was new to her!) . . . Then to go to a dinner, given by the Minister of Uruguay and Madame de Varela in honor of the Ambassador of Great Britain and Lady Geddes at the Pan-American building, where the representatives of no fewer than seven countries as far apart as Persia and Norway, Italy and the Argentine, geographically speaking, but very close together in friendliness and good will, sat around the oval table in the Council Chamber where we dined. We gathered

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in the gallery overlooking the patio with its dripping, lighted fountain of tawny marble and its huge glossy palms and under the floating flags of the Pan-American countries drank our coffee. Our hostess, one of the most beautiful women of the diplomatic corps, in a 292 dress of sheer black lace, quaint jewels, and a big red rose stuck in the back of her dark hair, flitted from one guest to another, chatting alternately in English, French and Spanish, with an ease which very few women can equal. . . . At last to go late in the evening to a reception in honor of the British Debt Commissioners at the British Embassy, where a sergeant of dragoons, gorgeous in a scarlet uniform, stood at attention in the great entrance hall, gay with palms and poinsettias. A slim, tasseled cord of scarlet and gold ran the length of the reception room to keep the guests in single file until after they had greeted the distinguished visitors from overseas, when they all came together, with the most cordial of greetings, in the glittering ballroom beyond, and went, in friendly little groups, into the taper-lighted, flower-banked dining room. . . . And then home, tired but happy, to hang up your best dress very carefully, because—unless you are rich enough to have two best dresses!—you will need to wear it again the next night, and the next, and the next, to other dinners and other receptions—to the one given at the Congressional Club in honor of Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge, for instance, which was given on the same night as the one on which the National Federation of Women's Clubs opened their fine new national headquarters—a spacious, *friendly* sort of a house on N Street, admirably suited to their purpose—and as all the members of Congress and the diplomatic corps were invited to that also, the activities of the evening began early and ended late, not only for this particular senator's wife, but for many of them!

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This pleasant housewarming took place during a week when two very important conventions, called by the Secretary of Labor, were gathered here—the meeting of the National Executive Board of the General Federation, and the Conference of Women in Industry. They overlapped each other, for in many cases the same women served as delegates to both, and this arrangement was, therefore, an extremely advantageous one.



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The General Federation began its sessions first, and in the course of them, it indorsed several bills—among them the Keyes immigration bill, now before Congress, to provide for the entrance into this country of sufferers in the Near East who have relatives already here able to take care of them. Considering my very close relationship by marriage to this humanitarian measure, I was, of course, delighted that so large and influential a body of women should formally approve it. The Federation also indorsed the Federal Child Labor bill; the Fess Home Economics bill; and the Jones substitute (for the Bursum bill) under which the government would provide a self-sustaining system for the reclamation of arid tracts owned by the Pueblos and for a court to adjudicate the claim of “squatters” on their lands.

This Bursum bill, introduced by Senator Bursum of New Mexico, and the Jones substitute bill, introduced by his colleague, Senator Jones, have both been the cause of a good deal of interest here lately, and feeling has run high on both sides of the question. The Bursum bill, “to ascertain and settle land claims of persons not Indian within Pueblo Indian land grants, and reservations in the state of New Mexico,” was 294 approved by Mr. Fall, the Secretary of the Interior, who gave permission that it should be called “an administration measure,” and was favorably reported out with the unanimous consent of the Committee on Public Lands and Surveys, to which it had been referred, into the Senate, where it also passed unanimously. A short time afterwards, however, it was recalled from the House of Representatives at the request of Senator Borah of Idaho, the reason given for this rather unusual course of procedure being that it “had passed under a misunderstanding”—the feeling being, apparently, that the non-Indian “squatters” upon Pueblo lands were being considered at the expense of the original and rightful owners of these tracts. The Jones substitute bill, somewhat differently framed, was introduced in the hope of correcting this evil. Pending further action upon the matter, hearings have been taking place before the Senate Public Lands Committee, to which considerable color has been added by the presence of a number of Pueblo “governors” dressed in native costume, who have

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come here to plead their own cause, and Mrs. Atwood, the chairman of the Indian Welfare Commission in the General Federation, had made a spirited address in their behalf:

“I hold that this traditional policy of the Indian Office is inhumane, costly to the taxpayers, and largely fruitless to the good of the Indians. It is destructive towards many wholesome and precious elements of civilization. It has had, and is having, the effect of turning the Indians into a race of social half-breeds. 295 . . . It is a policy contrary to the policy which other enlightened nations pursue towards their aborigines. . . .

“The Spanish pioneers, more than two hundred years ago, guaranteed to the several Pueblos that they should remain peacefully in possession of tracts of land that were specified by metes and bounds. . . . The United States Congress, about the year 1859, confirmed these early Spanish grants, and the Pueblos to-day hold parchments signed by Abraham Lincoln confirming these ancient Spanish grants. . . . To-day we find that the facts and the acknowledged law do not fit together. We find that all the Pueblos have lost some land and some water, that some of the Pueblos have lost nearly all their land and all their water. We find that the white man, crowding on to the Pueblo lands, has taken possession of these green acres which were created out of the desert through the labor of Pueblo Indians in historic and prehistoric times. . . . The passage of the Bursum bill would mean that the Pueblos could no longer hope for a tardy justice at the hands of the United States. Aside from its material effects, it would break their spirit and annihilate the hope which still burns in their souls. . . . Viewed from the outside, the Bursum bill would be a cynical repudiation under the forms of law of guarantees as solemn as a nation can give its dependent wards. . . .

“We urge that the Jones bill should be construed as an emergency measure.”

The executive board of the General Federation came to still a third decision, however, which—speaking impartially—will 296 probably have much greater and more far-reaching consequences than either of the others I have mentioned. It indorsed a national uniform

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marriage and divorce bill, drawn up by Mrs. Edward Franklin White, the chairman of its legislative department, who is also deputy attorney-general of Indiana. This bill has since been introduced into the Senate by Mr. Capper of Kansas, and since an amendment to the Constitution giving Congress power to deal with the marriage and divorce question is necessary before it can pass a uniform law to take the place of the forty-nine—one for each state and one for the District of Columbia now in force, a joint resolution providing for such an amendment was introduced at the same time. It reads:

“The Congress shall have power to make laws which shall be uniform throughout the United States on marriage and divorce, the legitimization of children, and the care and custody of children affected by annulment of marriage or by divorce.”

The bill itself, which has been very carefully prepared, is several pages long, so I cannot attempt to tell you about it fully, though I hope very much that you will secure a copy of it and read it yourself; for, next to the Sheppard-Towner Bill and the Child Labor Bill, I consider it the most important measure of special interest to women which has yet been introduced into Congress, and it strikes several keynotes to which you should certainly listen, whether you agree with them or not. It provides that the laws which govern both marriage and divorce shall be the same in every state in the Union, instead of all different, as they are now; 297 that a marriage which is legal in California, for instance, shall be legal in Maine; that a divorce which is valid in New Hampshire—which now has fourteen grounds upon which one can be obtained—shall be valid in South Carolina, which now admits no grounds whatever; and that no children shall be branded as illegitimate in New York whose parents have been declared legally wedded in Nevada. It sets the legal marriageable age, with parental consent, at sixteen for girls and eighteen for boys (did you know, Alice, that there were now nine states in which girls of twelve and boys of fourteen could marry, and seventeen states in which there is no minority age limit?) and at eighteen for girls and twenty-one for boys without parental consent; it prohibits the marriage of imbeciles, the insane, feeble-minded, epileptic, paupers, those afflicted with venereal disease or tuberculosis, of blacks and whites, and of first cousins; and it requires

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due published notice of the intention to marry, and at least two witnesses for a marriage ceremony. It provides for divorce for five causes—applicable alike to men and women—adultery, cruel and inhumane treatment, abandonment or failure to provide for a period of a year, incurable insanity, and the commission by either party of an infamous crime. In all cases, a year must elapse after divorce before remarriage can take place.

“The idea is not to make divorce easier,” Senator Capper said in introducing the bill, “but to make marriage safer for the young; to insure to the children of the future better health and heredity; and to prevent hasty and ill-considered marriages. Divorce will not be made easier. While the law will enlarge the 298 grounds of divorce in two or three states, it will at the same time adjust the differences in the other forty-five, and bring them to a common understanding, one which will permit justifiable divorce and do away with migratory divorces and with many of the injustices which they often bring about.”

The General Federation, though it has been the pioneer among organizations in urging the introduction of this measure before Congress, is not by any means the only one which intends to work for its passage. It was a very inspiring experience for me to attend a luncheon given by Mrs. Parkhurst, contributing editor of *Pictorial Review*, one of its warmest advocates, in honor of Mrs. Winter, the president of the General Federation, and Mrs. White—who, by a happy coincidence, had that very morning been admitted to practice before the Supreme Court, an honor which few women attain, at which the presidents or representatives of a dozen or so great organizations were gathered around a beautifully decorated table. They rose, one after the other, as the dessert was being passed—the most beautiful dessert, Alice, that I ever beheld, I think; ice-cream swans resting upon great blocks of clear ice, so that they looked for all the world as if they were floating lightly on a miniature lake—and pledged their allegiance and cooperation. I sat silently by, being merely a privileged “observer,” like the much-discussed Mr. Boynton at the present European Conference, but in my heart I pledged mine also again—for I did so to myself long ago!

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As I said before, many of the women who came to 299 the Federation board meeting also attended the sessions of the Industrial Conference, and Mrs. Winter acted as presiding officer at one of them, Mrs. Park, the president of the League of Women Voters, at another, and Mrs. Yost, the legislative representative of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, at still another. There was something very splendidly typical of the times to me, something very significant, in the way these different groups of women—who not so very long ago would have been sharply divided by the terms “ladies of leisure” and “working women,” each distrusting and looking down upon the other, now came together for coöperation and mutual helpfulness. The conference was called by the Secretary of Labor “to formulate standards which shall promote the welfare of wage-earning women, improve their working conditions, increase their efficiency, and advance their opportunities for profitable employment.” It was conducted from start to finish under government auspices, a friendly message from President Harding being the first one read, and one full of warm admiration and sympathy being sent by the conference to Mrs. Harding. There was hardly a meeting at which one or more members of Congress were not present, both on the platform and in the audience, and Mrs. McCormick, the wife of the senator from Illinois, Mrs. Gifford Pinchot, the wife of the governor of Pennsylvania, and Miss Alice Robertson, congresswoman from Oklahoma, were among the other official women besides myself who followed the proceedings with the deepest interest. The various topics under discussion, “What Women Workers Mean to Industry,” “What 300 Industry Means to Women Workers,” “Health Standards for Women in Industry,” “Home Work,” “Women's Wages,” and “Labor Legislation for Women,” were earnestly and intelligently discussed by employers and employees, doctors and welfare workers, representatives of the Trade Union League and representatives of the Open Shop. There were divergent but never unfriendly views, and there was quite as much gratitude expressed towards manufacturers who had proved fair-minded and progressive, as there was condemnation for those who have chosen the opposite course.

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The opening speech at the first session—presided over by Miss Anderson, whose strong and benignant face, lighted with the kindest sort of a smile, it is always a great joy to me to watch—was made by Mr. Davis, the Secretary of Labor. “We are here to-day,” he said, “in the interest of eight and one-half million women of America who march in the rank of the nation's wage-earners. . . . There is no evading the fact that women are in industry to stay. The duty devolves upon the whole people to see that their employment is safeguarded, so that the general welfare of the nation may not suffer. I trust, with all my heart, that the day may never return when we shall see, as the people of my native town of Wales have seen, a woman at work in the steel-rolling mill, standing before the giant rolls in the seething heat and dust, wrestling with one hundred or two hundred pounds of iron. That sight is only about half a century gone in the iron and steel industry abroad, but I trust it will never return. I am confident that we can keep on our way 301 towards giving to all of our women the higher, better, nobler things of life. For our country can be only as good as its women. The nation of the future can be no better than its mothers. . . . Take out of industry these mothers who have babes to care for. An economic structure which is anywhere based upon the labor in industry of the mothers of the nation who have babes is false, and sooner or later it will come crashing down about our heads. If in this conference we can do this one thing, we can each and every one of us go hence filled with the determination to stamp out the need for the industrial exploitation of the mothers whose babes need care, and we will have accomplished much.”

This part of the secretary's speech aroused not only great enthusiasm, but considerable discussion; and Miss Julia Lathrop was met with deafening applause when she rose and stated, with the conviction that comes from her long experience, that we should never get to the root of this trouble until the father of the family is paid a living wage upon which he can support his wife and children. There are, however, many cases in which the father is incapacitated or missing—“we have always the three dreaded d's to deal with,” she said in a later speech, “disease, divorce, and desertion” (she might, I thought, have added two

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others which are even worse—drink and death), “and these must be provided for in some other way.”

But there was another part of the secretary's speech which interested me, if possible, even more than this, and which I am almost sure you have neither read nor heard about, for it was not in his prepared address, 302 and has not, so far as I know, been printed in any newspaper. He told it very simply and spontaneously, almost as if impelled by some unseen force to do so. After he had practically finished, first sketching his arrival in the “Land of Promise,” one of six little children whom his mother brought over in the steerage in the hope of mending their fortunes, and telling the story of his first “job” as an iron-puddler before he was eight years old, he went on: “Not long ago I was with a group of men who began an evening of reminiscence by telling, each in turn, what the pleasantest experience of his childhood had been. I dreaded to have my turn come, because there were not many pleasant experiences in my childhood of which I could tell. But at last I thought of one: When I was eleven years old, my younger brother and I changed places on the twelve-hour shift which began at two in the morning, and ended at two in the afternoon. It was very dark between our little home and the mine. So every morning, at two o'clock my mother used to get out of bed and put some tea on the stove and light a kerosene lamp—we were considered quite well-to-do because we had this one kerosene lamp—and open the door and sing in her native Welsh. She stood there singing, near the little twinkling light, until one little boy had safely reached home from the mine, and was sheltered again beside her drinking his hot tea, and until the other little boy, wakened to begin his work, and cheered with the tea before he started out, had trudged off into the night and safely reached the mine. Neither of us ever had to take that trip without the comfort of the tea, and the song, and the light. The picture of my mother, 303 singing in the darkness, is the brightest memory I have.”

“The nation of the future can be no better than its mothers,” he had said a few minutes before. Are there any mothers, in any nation, any better than those who lighten the darkness for their children? All glory to that woman with her lifted lamp and her singing

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soul! The story was one of the “Land of Promise” indeed—the child of the steerage, the tiny iron-puddler groping his way home at two in the morning, the member of the President's Cabinet—with the light his mother had kindled shining behind him still! But the story was even more than that—it was the most vital plea against child labor that I have ever heard. I was not surprised that after it there was not a single speaker at the conference whom I heard, who did not say, some time in the course of his remarks, “And I am in favor of a constitutional amendment to abolish child labor.” So insistent—and so persistent—this sentence became, that it was like the theme to a melody upon which all the variations in it are based—the melody of the happiness of children.

The woman speaker at the conference whom I enjoyed most was, I think, Miss Melinda Scott, a representative from the United Textile Workers of America, who had, of course, the employees' viewpoint. She was an alert little woman, as merry as she was earnest, and as full of vitality as she was of information. “It has been said at this conference,” she flung out, “that some girls go to work to earn silk stockings and silk petticoats. Well, suppose they do? More 304 power to them!” And, oh, how heartily I agreed with her when she said that, for if there is anything that makes me sick and tired, Alice—to use a good, homely, old-fashioned phrase—it is to hear a woman who has never had to lift her finger to get the lovely clothes in which she is invariably clad say that the “working girl” ought not to even want the pretty things which she can have as a matter of course. It is human nature for girls to want pretty things, and I, for one, think no girl has quite so good a right to them as the one who earns them. “I wanted a red dress when I was a girl,” Miss Scott went on. “No one will ever know how much I wanted that red dress. I couldn't have it, of course. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't earn enough money to get it. But every time I've seen a girl in a red dress since, I've been glad that she could.” In spite of her cheerful manner, as far removed from sentimentality and “sob-stuff” as can possibly be imagined, it was almost entirely of the darker side of industrial conditions—which, thank God, are gradually mending, but not yet mended—that Miss Scott spoke. She talked of babies born on the floor in factories where she had worked, because there was not even a dressing



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room where their mothers, unreleased up to the very hour of confinement, could go to bring them into the world; of one locked toilet shared by two factories in the same building, the key hanging by the manufacturer's desk, for which every girl must go and ask before she could have it; of little children making violets in sweatshops for three cents a gross, their mothers urging them to "try to keep awake a little longer, we need the money so much. . . ." She dealt in no vague generalizations, she promulgated no vague theories. She told facts as she had known them, and made specific recommendations based upon these facts. And because her recommendations seemed to me so clearly concise and basically sound, and because they were, in the main, what the convention as a whole recommended, I am going to give them to you exactly as she enumerated them:

"A period of rest before and after childbirth for the sake of both mother and child.

"No child labor. Schooling for children up to the age of sixteen, that they may have better physical and mental development.

"A forty-eight hour week and one day's rest in seven, because women are both homemakers and bread-winners.

"Elimination of night work.

"Proper sanitary conditions in factories and mercantile establishments.

"Minimum wage laws until women are able through organization to secure for themselves better wages.

"Workmen's compensation which shall provide ample compensation for both men and women.

"Widows' pensions which shall give to the mother or guardian of children adequate allowance during school years.

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“Rehabilitation for both men and women who are victims of industrial accidents.”

“If we are to deal successfully with the subject of women in industry,” one of the speakers said, in summing up the whole question, “we must get away from the attitude of mind of prejudiced men and indifferent 306 women.” She was right. Prejudice and indifference do more harm than actual antagonism, because they are harder to fight. In doing our share, whatever it is, to help, let us pray, dear Alice, to be delivered from both. . . .

“The height of the season in Washington!” It is wonderful, isn't it? I hope you are glad that you have mounted it with me.

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. February.

Dear Marion,

Do you remember the first formal luncheon you ever gave—the luncheon in my honor at the time I announced my engagement, when the girl sitting on my right had her arm joggled while she was helping herself to a squab, and landed that squab squarely on the front breadth of the brand-new, accordion-pleated, pale-blue crêpe-de-chine dress which was part of my bridal finery? I have thought of the episode with amused reminiscence often this last month, partly, perhaps, because I have been longing to see you—you write me less often than any of my other friends—and partly because I have never been to so many luncheons in my life as I have attended lately. They have been as prevalent as the “flu,” and ever so much pleasanter! For weeks on end I have hardly eaten a midday meal in my own house, and I know that my experience is no different from that of most official women—one of them told me the other day that she had been invited to thirteen for the same three days!

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The most important of all the spring luncheons in Washington, however, is the annual “breakfast” of the 308 Congressional Club. I never saw the ballroom at Rauschers', where these breakfasts are always held, look prettier than it did for the one this month, with gayly-colored silk flags forming a frieze, and branches of feathery willow intermingled with the smilax all around the mirrored walls. As the date for this festivity fell near St. Valentine's Day, our place cards were heart shaped, and the Valentine idea was attractively carried out through the menu, which ended with ices in the form of tiny cupids with bows and arrows, resting lightly on beds of spun sugar, and heart-shaped red and white peppermints. After luncheon was over, we were given, through the courtesy of Mr. Will Hays, a “pre-view” of a beautiful new moving picture, which has not yet been released, the Marine Band playing the exquisite incidental music for it. Just before the presentation began, Mrs. Frelinghuysen, the retiring president, made a charming little speech, part of which I want to share with you, because it seems to me that it defines so perfectly the aims of the club, and the real importance of the part it plays, not only in Washington, but, indirectly, throughout the country.

“The members of this Congressional Club come from every section of our great country; they form in an indirect way part of the official life of the government. And through meeting here, and learning to know the varied interests and needs of north, south, east and west, we ought to get a broader view of the needs of the whole, and create an influence in the political life of the Capital that makes for a better understanding, 309 and unity of purpose that reflects directly on the government.

“I feel that our aim should be to remove sectional differences and partisanship, and our club should help us to remember that we have one common country and one united purpose—that is, to wish our government to be the best, and our people the happiest, in the whole world.”

The newly elected officers of the club, who come into power almost immediately now—for the “sessions” of the club coincide with those of Congress—, were kept extremely busy

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acknowledging congratulations on the day of the breakfast, and I felt very strongly that not only they, but the club, and the women of America, were to be congratulated on the board which is to direct such a powerful organization during the next two years. We hear so much that is inaccurate and silly—I might almost say slanderous—about the frivolity and light-mindedness of “society women” to-day, that I think it is rather interesting to be able to tell you that *every woman on this board is a church member*, all but two are college graduates, and that every one has, in one way or another, done something “worth while” in the generally accepted sense of the word, both here and in her own state. It is an unwritten law that the presidency shall go, alternately, to the wife of a senator, then to the wife of a representative, and the husband of the new president, Mrs. Byrnes, is a congressman from South Carolina. She is an extremely pretty woman, with an unusually sweet smile and gracious manner, tall, fair, and graceful, 310 with lovely blue eyes, curly hair, and an exquisite complexion; and as she has spent her summers for years in New Hampshire not far from Pine Grove Farm, I have come to feel that I know her very well. She graduated from Converse College, where she was treasurer of the college magazine, and where she shone—as she has ever since—in athletics of all sorts, for she is devoted to golf, tennis, and horseback riding. Since her marriage, she has devoted practically all her time, unreservedly, to her husband and his career, traveling with him all over this country, driving him back and forth to the Capitol every day, accompanying him on his campaigns, and, I am very sure, having a great deal to do with his repeated returns to Congress. Mrs. Quin of Mississippi, the first vice president, has been identified with equal closeness in her husband's work, for she acts as his secretary, keeping regular office hours and attending to his correspondence. And how she does it, considering all the other things which she accomplishes, is certainly a mystery to me, for there seems to be no end to her talents and attainments. She was president of her class at college, and editor in chief of her college yearbook, and has done an immense amount of splendid journalistic work; she studied for several years in Europe, and is a skilled musician and linguist; she is, and has been for years, prominent in the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Daughters of the Confederacy and the Mississippi Society; she organized the first woman's club in Natchez,

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and has gone straight on with her work along those lines ever since. Yet she always seems as unhurried and as calm and as sweet, as if she had nothing

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311 on earth to do but “sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam.” Sometimes, I think, Marion, that is the greatest accomplishment of all in these crowded days—to be a thoroughly up-to-date woman, engaged in all sorts of helpful activities, and still never to grow hard or hurried, never to lose that lovely and quiet femininity which gave our grandmothers their charm.

Mrs. Fess, the second vice president—whose husband, after a long term in the House, was elected to the Senate last November, and who was actively engaged in literary and university work for many years during the early part of his career—has done something which I think very few women would have courage and initiative enough to do—gone to college with her own children! She went as a girl, graduating as honor student of her class; she associated herself with her husband in his research; and then, when the first of her three sons began his college course, she decided to enter again—a different institution this time—and took her degree at Antioch about the same time that he did! Strangely enough, Mrs. Sanders of Indiana, the third vice president, has done a similar thing in taking a course at George Washington University since she came to Washington, already having, before and immediately after her marriage, been to a state normal school and a state university. It means a good deal to combine serious and confining study with an official program, and the woman who succeeds in doing it is a reproach to those of us who, in the course of an ordinarily busy life, do not even “find time” to keep up with current events.

Mrs. Smithwick of Florida, another extremely pretty 312 woman, has been especially active in the Daughters of the American Revolution; and Mrs. Reeside of Pennsylvania, the fifth vice president—the daughter of a former congressman—has endeared herself to every one in the club during her long service as chairman of the house committee. Giving

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a party there, a privilege which every member enjoys, has, with her help, been one of the easiest as well as one of the most delightful forms of entertainment open to a harassed and weary hostess. The recording secretary, Mrs. Leatherwood of Utah—another board member who was honor student of her class when she graduated from college—has been especially identified with club work, as a member of the Salt Lake chapter of the A. C. A., as president of the State Federation of Women's Clubs in Utah, and as the first president of the Intermountain and Coast Organization. Mrs. Chindblom of Illinois, the recording secretary, is preëminently the musician, not only of the board, but of the club, for she is a brilliant pianist, playing constantly, and with great success, on the concert stage. She is an alert, energetic little lady, full of vitality and “pep,” who cooks almost as well as she plays, and makes the smartest kind of clothes for herself and her family into the bargain! Mrs. Wyant of Pennsylvania, whose father has long been a Democratic judge in the Republican district which sent her husband to Congress—a fact which accounts in part, perhaps, for her fine broadmindedness—has “always been treasurer of things, all her life” to quote her own laughing definition of her sphere of usefulness; and that she will make an excellent one now, as she has in the past, there is no doubt.

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Later in the afternoon of the day of the congressional breakfast, the congressional ladies living at the Congress Hall Hotel—I believe there are forty-eight of them altogether—had their annual day at home together, receiving in the square open balcony which makes so attractive a setting for such an occasion, while next door, at George Washington Inn, Miss Alice Robertson gave her farewell tea; and, across the sunny square, in the Capitol, Mrs. Nolan of California, who has been elected to the seat left vacant by her husband's death, was sworn into her new office. “I cannot forget that my election is a tribute to the memory of my husband,” she said after she had taken the oath, “and in the belief and expectation that I, who was his close associate in his legislative work for years, could best carry on his work in his place.” Can any woman, I wonder, raise a nobler monument to her beloved dead than in doing that, whatever the work has been? I felt that her little speech, coming

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at the close of a day which had seemed peculiarly set apart for congressional women, brought it to a fitting and beautiful end.

During the past two months, the Ladies of the Senate and the Ladies of the Congressional Club have attempted and carried through one special piece of work which has seemed to me extremely worth while: The Red Cross building, dedicated to “the heroic women of the Civil War,” is kept open almost as a shrine would be, every day in the week, in order that visitors to the city may never be deprived of the opportunity of seeing its records of splendid achievements, its symbolic paintings and stained-glass windows, the treasures 314 of the early history of the organization, and the museum of its war relics. But on Sundays its paid staff of workers and the professional hostess who is always at the service of guests who desire special guiding and information are not, of course, on duty, and it has for some time been the custom for prominent women in Washington to act as volunteer hostesses on that day. Lately, the official women as a group, at the suggestion of Mrs. Stanfield, who seems to have a never-failing fund of good ideas, have assumed the pleasant task, with Mrs. Stanfield acting as general chairman, and Mrs. New, Mrs. Kellogg, Mrs. Taylor of Tennessee, Mrs. Young, Mrs. Watson of Indiana, and myself acting as subchairmen for the separate Sundays; Mrs. Coolidge, with the splendid spirit which she always shows, helping us all, and heading the half-dozen assistants which each of us had I shall look back on my own day of service as one of the pleasantest I have had in a long time—largely, of course, because I had such congenial helpers! The hours were from eleven to four, so, as there is no restaurant at hand, I took a picnic lunch—chicken-mayonnaise sandwiches, an angel cake, and thermos bottles full of piping-hot coffee and chocolate, and numerous other delicious things provided by our family treasure, Kathie—and, in our leisure moments, which were few and far between—for we had an immense crowd of visitors—we feasted, on the installment plan, that we might not all be “off duty” at once, comparing notes on the “personally conducted” tours which we had made. The tourists were so appreciative and interested that it was a real privilege to be with them, and, in the day of study 315 which I spent beforehand in order to be able to

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tell them what they would wish to know, I learned a great deal myself, which filled me with greater pride in the building than I have ever felt before. There was no story, however, which I found so much joy in telling as that of the three beautiful Tiffany windows in the assembly room, which cover more space than any modern stained-glass windows in the world. The lefthand one was given by the Woman's Relief Corps—a picture of Filomena, the patron saint of healing, carrying the Red Cross shield, the symbolic figures of Mercy, Hope, Faith and Charity acting as her handmaidens; the right-hand window was given by the Daughters of the Confederacy—Una, the heroine of Spenser's "Faërie Queene," her arms full of roses, the personification of fortune and good deeds, her attendants carrying a white banner emblazoned with a golden heart, a cross and a lifted lamp; the central window *the joint gift of the two organizations* (and I shall have to confess that every time I came to that part of the story, Marion, thrills went all over me, and tears came to my eyes, it seems to me so touching and so wonderful that they should have come together in this memorial), the figure of the Good Samaritan in armor, the Red Cross Knight succoring a wounded friend. "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came unto me." Echoing down the centuries comes this message from the great Friend, the great Healer; nowhere is it more truly interpreted to-day than in the spirit of the Red Cross. 316 Nowhere is it more beautifully illustrated than in these windows given in memory of their mothers by the women of the north and south, standing hand in hand.

The Pan-American Conference which began on the fourth of December came to an end this month in a plenary session at which were signed one treaty, eleven conventions and three protocols affecting the relations of the United States with Central America, and those of the Central American republics among themselves. On the same day, and almost at the same hour that these important agreements were signed in the Pan-American building, the President, still looking very weary after his recent illness, came to the Capitol to submit, at a joint session of Congress, the report of the Foreign Debts Commission



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(consisting of Secretary Mellon, the Chairman, Secretary Hughes, Secretary Hoover, Senator Smoot and Representative Burton) on the funding of the British debt, and to urge the acceptance of its terms—that Great Britain should be allowed to extend the time for the payment of its war debt over a period of sixty-two years, at a rate of three and a half per cent interest for ten years, and at three per cent after that. “This settlement between the British Government and the United States has the utmost significance,” the commission stated. “It is a business settlement fully preserving the integrity of the obligation, and it represents the first great step in the readjustment of the intergovernmental obligations growing out of the war.” The President recommended that settlement in the most earnest and forceful terms. “It means vastly more than the mere funding and the ultimate discharge of the greatest international loan ever contracted,” he said. “It is a recommitment of the English-speaking world to the validity of contract; it is in effect a pledge against war and war expenditures, and a rigid adherence to that reduction and retrenchment which enhances stability precisely as it discharges obligations.”

Since Great Britain is, so far, the only nation which has shown itself both willing and able to pay its war debts to us, it seemed reasonable to expect that a response to the recommendation of the commission and the President's message, in the form of action by the Senate, might be forthcoming with promptness. But it was not until more than a fortnight had passed that the matter came to a vote, late in the evening, when even the bitterest opposition had wearied of a debate which had gradually narrowed down from speeches of unlimited length to speeches of two hours, of one hour, of ten minutes. Mrs. Coolidge and I were the only women left in the Senate gallery when the final calls for the ayes and noes came, and the Debts Bill passed by a vote of seventy to thirteen. Often as I have heard that call, sure as I may be of its result, it never fails to fill me with excitement; and there is something about the atmosphere of a night session—the illumined dome, the long, echoing corridors, the Senate chamber, gloomy enough at best, shadowy in the dim light, the hushed galleries, the slowly moving clock, the electric force of nearly a hundred men still contending after a long day—that is very thrilling. I would not have missed a

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moment 318 of it. But least of all would I have missed the wonderful speech made by Mr. Glass, the senator from Virginia. He spoke with earnestness, fire, and conviction, and he spoke from the fund of information and authority which his position as Secretary of the Treasury during the time that the British loans were made, invested him. I am rather surprised that what he said has been so little quoted in the newspapers, at least in those which I have seen; for here it has been hailed as one of the greatest speeches—some people, old-timers at that, have gone so far as to call it *the* greatest—ever made on the floor of the Senate.

“Mr. President, it is my purpose to vote for this adjustment of Great Britain's indebtedness to the United States, primarily because I am one of those who think that the indebtedness of the United States to Great Britain is quite as great as Great Britain's indebtedness to the United States.

“Secondly, I propose to vote for the adjustment because I believe it is a sound economic business arrangement. . . .

“Mr. President, it has been said—and perhaps too greatly accentuated and exaggerated—that this government was in no state of preparedness when it went into the war, when it assumed a part of the burden of that cause for which Great Britain struggled three years before we took our place beside her. We were not prepared. But in the course of time, Mr. President, we transported over the seas two million American boys, not one of whom suffered death at the hand of the enemy. We did this when hospital ships, under protection of the Red Cross, could not safely cross the 319 English Channel. Let us suppose that Great Britain's fleet had not held the German fleet behind Heligoland, cowering and afraid to venture out. Let us suppose, that by our failure to loan the ten billion dollars, the German fleet had come out and ranged the high seas. What would have been the story? Instead of transporting two million troops without the loss of a man, hundreds of thousands of American soldiers would have found a grave at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, food for sharks and other monsters of the sea.

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“Oh, it is set up in reply that had we not made the loan, had we not gone to the rescue, what would have become of Great Britain? The same thing would have become of her that would later have become of us. She and we would have been the prey of an autocratic barbarian power. . . .

“I wish it had been the privilege of every American citizen, as it was mine, to stand on the battlefield of Ypres and behold that shattered little village, not worth the life, perhaps, of one heroic Briton, except as a symbol of liberty. . . .It was there that civilization was again saved by the valor and prowess of British arms; and it is sickening to turn from a scene like that, where lives were cheerfully given for a cause that was our cause, though belatedly espoused, to praise our own generosity in refraining from making a profit out of loaning our ally a few silver dollars to bring back India from the verge of financial collapse, perhaps of revolution, which would have cut off the supplies of all the eastern armies of those nations with whom we were fighting the war.

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“Oh, we ‘won the war.’ Yes; Great Britain was the first to say so; France at another time said so; and ever since we have delighted to think so. Yet there are resting beneath the sod to-day one and a half million of British boys, and quite as many of the French, not to speak of the Italians and the Belgians. Our boys would have won the war; there are none braver, no greater valor was ever exhibited anywhere; and yet we are forgetting Belleau Wood, we are forgetting Château Thièrry, we are forgetting *our* dead as well as the dead of Britain and France in a maudlin sympathy for a whimpering bully who would have conquered the earth but for having been intercepted in the barbarous and inhuman warfare.

“We ‘won the war.’ Yes. We entered it opportunely. I conceive, as others conceive, that without our coming in, it would have been lost. God pity America had it been lost I Our ambassador at Berlin was told that it would be our turn next; and it would have been our turn next, when instead of fighting side by side with Britain's sons and with the sons of

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France and Italy, we would have had to fight alone. There would have been no economics in that. . . .

“Our contribution was money and theirs was lives. ‘Nominated in the bond,’ as the phrase of Shylock runs. Mr. President, under the Venetian contract there was to be no drop of blood shed in penalty of capital punishment; but in this case, British blood flowed in streams before the bond was executed, and after the bond was made. . . .”

A great speech—a great man who could make it—a 321 great country which can produce such men I Thank God we have them all. There is no better patriot than the man who, loving his own country beyond and above all, can still acknowledge what she owes to others.

My dear love, as ever,

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

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Washington, D. C. March.

Dear Mary,

The King is dead—long live the King! Or, to change that time-honored exclamation to fit the present time and place, the Sixty-seventh Congress—the first Congress that ever held four sessions, breaking all previous records by the actual number of days—415—which it convened; the Congress which passed six hundred bills and ninety resolutions; the Congress which for the first time in nine years will not be functioning through the summer—has passed into history. Let us look hopefully forward towards the Sixty-eighth!

One evening after a night session towards the end of the season, I stood near the private elevator, on which I had just descended from the gallery, beside the revolving door leading from the corridor to the short flight of gray stone steps outside waiting for faithful “Fordie,”

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and watched the members of the Senate pass out, singly or in little chatting groups. One by one they got into their motor cars, which drove up to the covered doorway, stopped a minute, and then disappeared into the darkness: my father's old friend and classmate at Harvard, Senator Lodge, slim and scholarly, as erect still as if no burden of care or years rested upon his shoulders; my father's pupil at 323 the University of Virginia, Senator Underwood, urbane and serene, the "velvet glove" personified, capable and strong; Senator Dillingham, gracious and cultured, for whom, as a very small girl, I did my first campaigning from the back of a "springboard" when he was running for governor of Vermont, and who predicted then, with some amusement, and with more truth than he guessed, that I would grow up to be a politician's wife; Harry's brilliant colleague, Senator Moses, former minister to Greece, who has a future, I should say, as full of promise as his past has been full of achievement. All linking me to pleasant memories in their hurried, friendly greetings as they passed by. The more newly made friends with whose wives I have poured tea at the Congressional Club, and "served" at the Senate luncheons, and "assisted" at our days at home—Senator Oddie, Senator Harris, Senator Caraway, Senator Pittman—a score of others. . . . I do not know why, but standing there, by that revolving door, responding to the kindly greetings, I felt closer to the life of the Senate than ever before, felt that it meant more to me than ever before; felt sorrier than I would have imagined possible that, after a few days, it would be "good-by" instead of "good night"—good-by for good in all too many cases; wished, more deeply than ever, that all the thinking women could come into closer and more intimate touch, into better understanding with the men who make up this great legislative body— *ours*. . . .

The spell of this feeling was still over me as I drove down to the Capitol again on the fourth of March—a Sunday morning as balmy and lovely as a 324 day in June, the warmest fourth of March on record, as a matter of fact, I believe. I was very early, and the galleries were still almost empty, the chamber entirely so, when I arrived. Gradually, then swiftly, both began to fill, the corridors surged with the overflow vainly seeking admission, and, by ten o'clock, when the session began, there was scarcely standing room anywhere

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above the “grand staircase.” Even the diplomatic gallery, usually absolutely deserted even upon the most exciting occasions, contained a large number of distinguished foreigners. A rather curious situation had been brought about by the confirmation of several men on the floor, whose term as senator was about to expire, to other positions. This made it possible to gaze down upon the senator from Washington, Mr. Poindexter, and behold in one and the same person our ambassador to Peru; upon the senator from Indiana, and recognize the postmaster-general, and so on. You could also look upon Mr. Smoot—quoting statistics as usual, this time mostly about sugar—tilting with Mr. Walsh of Massachusetts and Mr. Overman, who good-naturedly called him “a juggler with figures”; upon Mr. Bursum, vainly seeking, in the final fifteen minutes, for consideration of his pension bill; upon Mr. Curtis, demanding “the regular order of business”; and Mr. La Follette, inquiring tartly, “What *is* the regular order of business?” Upon Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Harrison, eulogizing their departing colleagues; upon those two good losers, whom every one will miss, Mr. Sutherland and Mr. Frelinghuysen, singing their own swan songs. Both made excellent speeches; but the latter was so especially dignified, 325 loyal and utterly lacking in any hint of bitterness or recrimination, that I want to quote part of it to you, as my idea of an almost perfect farewell address:

“It was the ambition of my life to represent my state in the United States Senate. I felt that it was the highest honor that could be granted to any one. My ambition to represent New Jersey has been fulfilled, and I have been privileged to sit in the Senate during the most eventful period in my country's history. It was also my ambition to represent my state as acceptably and capably as the three senators of my name and family who have preceded me in this body, and I hope I have measured up in some slight degree to the high standards they set. As I go forth again as a private citizen, I know that I have the respect of my constituency, even if they did not all vote for me. I regret leaving the splendid fellowship of my friends here. These friendships which I have formed will endure as long as I live. . . .

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“My business training and instinct lead me to express the hope that in the next Congress will come the much-needed reform in the rules, so that the country's business can be transacted more promptly and by the majority. I have again and again during my experience here seen this Senate, by reason of its rules, become pitiful through its impotence to govern its own body. If the Senate is to retain the esteem of the country which it has hitherto at times enjoyed, those who remain here to serve must recognize the great weight of public opinion demanding this change of policy. . . .

“May I express in closing my deep appreciation to 326 the Vice President who presides over this body for his many courtesies extended to me; . . . to my colleagues I have this to say in conclusion: as you face the future and the important questions you will be called upon to settle in this legislative body, may you have the broadest vision and wisdom, and may you continue those policies of government which have made for the greatness of our people and the welfare of our beloved country.”

I was, as I said, looking down and listening to all this, thrilled and stirred past all explanation. Then, suddenly, cutting in two a sentence in a speech made by Senator Dial, Vice President Coolidge's gavel thudded down. “The Sixty-seventh Congress is adjourned without day,” he said quietly, disregarding the more usual Latin Phrase “*sine die*.” At the left of the rostrum some one sang out, “good night.” Every one began to stream towards the doors. . . .

I, for one, streamed—and the word is no exaggeration, for I entirely forgot senatorial dignity in my haste to reach the House of Representatives before the more hilarious celebration, which always marks its closing, should be over—straight for the opposite end of the Capitol, and arrived panting—but still in time. At eleven o'clock the House had taken a recess; a tremendous farewell ovation had been given to “Uncle Joe” Cannon; and the Marine Band, huge and gorgeous, had grouped itself about the Speaker's desk. Mrs. Winifred Mason Huck, congresswoman from Illinois, had borrowed a violin from one of its musicians, and galleries and members had begun to sing and cheer together. “The Old

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Oaken Bucket," "Fare 327 well, My Own True Love," and "Dixie," to the accompaniment of the rebel war whoop, with gentlemen from all over the country joining lustily in, "When You and I Were Young, Maggie," the portly Mr. Winslow of Massachusetts leading his slimmer brethren in song—all followed each other in quick succession. The families of members began to surge on to the floor. Little children—baby girls in rosy, frilled bonnets, small boys in corduroy and scarlet ties—were lifted high in their fathers' arms above the semicircle of desks. Mrs. Mondell, Mrs. Longworth, dozens of other women, were standing beside their husbands. The first hilarity passed; some people were still laughing, but more were growing a little choky. "Home, Sweet Home" came after "Auld Lang Syne." And the final songs which the great orchestra played caught up and echoed a spirit which was mighty, not only in its patriotic, but in its devotional, strength: Praise God from Whom all blessings flow, The melody swept over us all like a triumph of thanksgiving.

Praise Him all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye Heavenly Host, Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Pleasant truths—like these—make pleasant telling; but unpleasant ones are not so agreeable to relate, and some of the proceedings of the Sixty-seventh Congress during its final fortnight of life unfortunately come under this heading. I have written you girls more than 328 once that I wished a rule for closure might be adopted in the Senate, and it was to this that Mr. Frelinghuysen referred in the speech which I have quoted a rule, that is, which would limit debate, so that any man could not arise at any time and speak for any *length* of time on any subject, unless there is unanimous consent. "Freedom of speech" is very dear, and rightly so, to American men and women and the sentiment that it ought to prevail in the Senate, of all places, is a natural one. If it were always used for disinterested purposes, not a single voice would ever have been raised against it. Unfortunately, the discovery was long ago made that that could be a means for blocking *any* kind of legislation, and that a mere handful of men—though they, like every other member of the Senate, owed their positions to majority rule—could prevent action by the simple, though exhausting, process of talking a measure to death t This gentlemanly



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form of legislative murder is known as filibustering, and has often been employed by both parties. Although there have been several famous filibusters in the past, I doubt whether any will go down in history to quite such lasting fame as that which has just taken place to prevent the passage of the Ship Subsidy Bill.

This bill, which I described in detail in my letter to Elsie two months ago, was the measure so strongly recommended by President Harding as the means by which American private enterprise might, with government help, though with an actual lessening of drain on the Treasury—which is now obliged to help finance the Shipping Board—be put in a position to compete successfully with foreign merchant marines, which it 329 is very far from doing at present. The President felt the passage of this measure to be so necessary that he called Congress in extra session before the regular session to consider the question, and addressed a joint session of both Houses on the subject. When, after some months had passed and no action had been taken, he again addressed a joint session, this time on the British Debt Funding Bill, he added a few remarks on the Ship Subsidy to that speech.

“I plead for a decision,” he said earnestly, “that if there is a favorable majority, the bill should be enacted. If a majority is opposed, the defeat will be decisive. Then, if Congress fails in providing the requested alternative measure, the executive branch of the government may proceed as best it can to end the losses in liquidation and humiliation. I speak frankly, because the situation demands frankness. There is call for congressional expression, not mere avoidance. I am not seeking to influence the Senate's decision, but I am appealing for *some* decision.”

This was fair enough, surely; the Senate's answer, it seems to me, was less fair. I am going to tell you about that reply in some detail, because I wish, if I can, to give you some idea of the lengths that have been gone to in order to defeat a bill which the House had passed, and for which a majority of votes were assured in the Senate, but which about a score of men, who were opposed to it, had determined should not, therefore, be brought to a vote.

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The filibuster began on the 19th of February with a speech by Senator Sheppard on the League of Nations. When the Senate met on the 20th, the announcement 330 was promptly made by the filibusterers that they had seventy-eight hours' worth (?) of speeches ready for deliverance. Senator Sheppard took the floor again with a continuation of the one which he had made the night before, and which was said to be good for sixteen hours out of the seventy-eight. He took only one sheet of typewritten paper from his desk at a time, so that those who had not heard this announcement, and those who thought that it might be like the reports of Mark Twain's death when he was hale and hearty, "greatly exaggerated," were constantly buoyed up by the hope that since he did not have a bulky manuscript in his hand, he would not speak long. But as one sheet after another fluttered to the floor until they looked like a snowdrift, and as he still kept extracting fresh ones from his desk, these hopes faded. And an announcement made by Senator Brookhart did not serve to brighten them.

"Senator Couzens will read the Scriptures from Noah's Ark to the Resurrection," he is reported as saying. "Senator Ladd can speak for a whole day on the subject (the Ship Subsidy) alone. Senator Borah will tell them about Russia, Senator Norris will give an address on the state of the Union, while Senator La Follette and I are good for a couple of days on general subjects." To this cheering piece of information was added another when Senator McKellar declared that he was ready to read Senator Smoot's thirteen-hour speech against the sale of the German ships. Senator Jones of Washington, who was in charge of the Ship Subsidy Bill, made the brief, though telling, reply that he was perfectly ready to hold the 331 Senate in session all that day and all that night, the next day and the next night—and that he would.

He was as good as his word. The Frelinghuysens were having a large farewell dinner that evening in honor of the Speaker and Mrs. Gillett. One after another of the senatorial ladies who had been invited, telephoned, as the day wore on, to ask Mrs. Frelinghuysen whether they should come without their husbands. One after another they were assured that they

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would be welcome, in a tone of voice that grew a little tremulous as afternoon advanced, though it was as sweet and cordial as ever—for Mrs. Frelinghuysen has been one of the most charming and gracious of senatorial hostesses. At eight o'clock a near-dove party instead of a well-ordered equal number of men and women were gathered. The masculine element consisted of some diplomats and representatives; a few senators who believed in the filibuster and who were therefore not interested in maintaining a quorum, as without a quorum the fight would have to be given up, a few who did believe in the filibuster, but who could not bear—in spite of the stern warning sent out by Senator Lodge and Senator Curtis, the republican leader and whip, that no social engagements should be made for the remainder of the session—to miss so delightful an occasion; but they had only half-swallowed their dinner, and had had no chance at all to listen to the beautiful music which came after it, when they were followed up by the sergeant at arms, and, still in evening dress, peremptorily hurried back to the Senate chamber—for a summons of this sort amounts to an arrest. Vice President Coolidge was also called away from a dinner and slipped into the presiding officer's chair in his swallowtail. Somehow the night wore on, the pile of important measures, passed by the House, lying untouched on the desk awaiting action. The filibusterers changed their tactics and began a series of roll calls. When these had consumed about an hour and a half, Senator Reed of Missouri, who had projected them, sarcastically remarked, "After this wholly unnecessary interruption, I shall continue," and resumed the speech he had been making when they began, and in the midst of which he had found it necessary to rest.

The boy stands at the burning desk— ran a clever parody in one of the Washington papers — Whence all but Jones have fled, And Sheppard makes an all-day speech That nearly knocks them dead. The shipping bill may be a wreck When all their say have said.

But it was far from being a matter for jest. The day before, the committee on public buildings and grounds had reported adversely on the generous offer of Mrs. Henderson of Missouri to give a fitting residence to the Vice President—a beautiful house on Sixteenth Street—as a memorial to her husband and only son, if Congress would supply the

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necessary funds to run it. The real need for such an establishment has never been more apparent than during the past two administrations, when, of a necessity, the White House 333 has been closed for official entertaining on account of illness there, and there has been no adequate provision made that the Vice President and his wife might do it instead. Congress apparently felt that it could not afford to make an appropriation for running expenses, which, it was estimated, would come to about \$15,000 a year. Yet, for that one day which I have just described, the expense alone of printing in the *Congressional Record* what had transpired, or failed to transpire, in the Senate chamber, aside from all other expenses connected with the session, was estimated at \$1,500—one tenth of the sum that would have saved us from national embarrassment. Think that over a little, Mary.

At eleven o'clock on the morning of the 21st, the farce began again. The actors, taking them "in the order of their appearance," were Senator Reed of Missouri, who resumed the speech supporting his resolution to direct the President to negotiate with Great Britain and France for the purchase of certain of their Caribbean possessions, large maps of which had been hung on the walls of the chamber; Senator Borah, who launched the promised appeal for the recognition of the Soviet government in Russia; Senator Lenroot, who denounced the position taken by the Secretary of the Treasury on the Lenroot-Anderson credit bills; Senator Williams, who began his speech with an indorsement of Senator Borah's, and wandered from that to every imaginable subject, wandering in leisurely fashion himself up and down the aisles as he did so, and cracking jokes to the great amusement of the galleries; and Senator Harrison, who followed him in 334 similar vein. A motion—which was actually a test of the strength of the supporters of the Ship Subsidy—made by Senator Heflin to adjourn was lost by a vote of 42 to 18. Another day and night came and went without the transaction of one particle of business. Another \$1,500, I suppose, was needed to pay for printing the *Record*.

If George Washington ever turns in his grave, I think he must have done so on the 22d, for his birthday was made an excuse for further delay, in the form of the reading of his farewell speech. Again it was nearly midnight before a recess took place; again a wasted day went

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to join those which had preceded it. Then came another—and another—and another. The tactics employed in all of them were so similar to those I have already described to you that I will not burden you by going into them in detail. At last Senator Jones said that “he recognized when he was beaten” and a unanimous consent agreement was reached to vote on the motion to recommit the shipping bill at one o'clock the following day. This was done, and the motion was lost by a vote of 48 to 36. *There were not even enough votes in the Senate to send it back to the committee.* Yet, for the sake of hundreds of other unconsidered bills, it was “displaced,” as the saying is, and the Senate proceeded to the consideration of the Filled Milk Bill and I am glad to say that it was passed, for it is, in my opinion, a most worthy measure, designed to prohibit interstate shipment of condensed or evaporated milk made from skimmed milk and oil substitutes for butter fat—such as cottonseed and coconut oil—which, of course, has not the 335 nutritive and digestive qualities of pure whole milk, though its appearance is the same.

This, as clearly and truthfully as I can give it to you, is the story of the Ship Subsidy filibuster. Perhaps you do not believe in the Ship Subsidy. Personally, I do, most emphatically, because: “First it is the composite plan of the best-informed agencies of the government; and second, no alternative has been suggested.” I believe, as a far greater writer than I (Mr. Brisbane) has put it, that “a nation without shipping is like a business without a delivery system.” But all this, important though it is, is beyond the main question. You believe in the Child Labor Amendment, do you not? That was favorably reported out of committee while the filibuster was going on, and Senator McCormick, the author of the measure, did everything in his power to get in to the floor. But no action could be taken on it because there was no time—after the filibuster. Hundreds and thousands of children will suffer because of that inaction. You believe, perhaps, in President Harding's recommendation of American adhesion to the protocol creating the permanent court of international justice? Senator King introduced a resolution asking for the consideration of this proposal but, needless to say, it could be given no consideration—because of the filibuster. I could name dozens of other measures which failed—because of the filibuster.

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But these two will serve as well as any for examples. On the very last afternoon that Congress was in session, Senator Heflin, with unfinished business of every description piled high around him, organized a “one man filibuster” and spoke for hours, 336 because the *House* would not pass a certain measure in which he was interested t It was one o'clock Sunday morning before a recess could be taken. These are the lengths to which filibustering can be carried—to which it is being carried. Mr. Underwood himself, the wise and capable leader of the Democrats, openly stated that he did not approve of what was taking place, that he would have no part in it, and stuck to his guns. His attitude made no difference. “Political parties are no longer on trial for what is being done in the Senate. The Senate itself is on trial.”

Now, let us turn from one end of Pennsylvania Avenue to the other—which I assure you I was very glad to do myself, and go from the Capitol to the White House for tea, after a long hard day for the first time in many a long month. Mrs. Harding received her guests in an upstairs sitting room, gay with spring flowers, cozy with deep comfortable chairs and huge sofas upholstered in chintz, warm with a bright wood fire leaping under a marble mantel, homelike with books and magazines and “intimate” photographs scattered about. I never saw her look so pretty, so like the lovely Lazzlo portrait of her, as she did that day, without her glasses and the black velvet band around her throat which she always used to wear, and dressed in the most heavenly tea gown of coral velvet and silver lace that you can imagine—the kind of garment that makes any normal feminine mouth water. She perched on the edge of the piano stool, and joked and chatted in her old lively way, treating her recent illness lightly and cheerfully. But she did something that meant—to me at least—far more than this. She 337 said, quietly and with the deepest sincerity, that she believed her life had been saved by the prayers of the American people. And I, for one, am inclined to think that she is right. We did pray for her recovery—every man and woman that I know—and our prayers were answered. Why, I wonder, do we not, as a nation, do more praying all the time? I do not mean by this merely the prayers we say in church, or beside our beds before we go to sleep, or that we teach our children—powerful and

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sanctified though these all are; but constantly, simply, without form or ceremony, through working days and sleepless nights, in sorrow, in shame, in perplexity, in supplication, in joy, in Thanksgiving. “More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.” This is not merely a quotation. It is a statement of fact.

When we had our tea which Mrs. Fletcher, the wife of the ambassador to Belgium, who was visiting at the White House, poured for us, we were asked if we would not like to see the rest of the rooms upstairs; and I do not think that our eager assent will be much of a surprise to you! So we went first to the President's library, where the tops of the bookcases and the walls are lined with interesting personal possessions of all sorts; and then through the four suites of guest rooms—square, sunny chambers, simple and spacious, so “folksy” with their muslin and flowered curtains and snowy counterpanes, and oh, so spotlessly and shiningly clean!—with their fine historic furniture: Lincoln's great bed of carved mahogany, more than eight feet long and broad in proportion; Andrew Jackson's four-poster, with room for a trundle 338 underneath; huge wardrobes and dressers covering half the side of a wall; gleaming bathrooms seen through half-open doors; flowers and books and rosy shaded lights everywhere; and Laddie Boy bounding along beside the military aide who acted as our guide.

It was, I think, the happiest afternoon that I have had this spring, the one that I shall remember longest and treasure most in memory. But next to it, I enjoyed most our final reception for the season at the Congressional Club, when Signora Olivia Rossetti Agresti, niece of the famous Rossetti poets and grand-daughter of Gabriel Rossetti, spoke to us about the International Agricultural Institute in Rome, which was founded through the efforts of an American, David Lupin. I thought at the time that I would write you in my next letter, what she told us that day, that I would try to give you some idea of how keen an interest in present-day Italy she stirred in my heart; but something has happened to change my mind; I have decided to wait and write you about it all *when I have seen it myself!* For, before this letter reaches you, I shall be in Italy, and the next one you have from me will have a foreign stamp on it—and so will the next—and the next—and the next

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t I'm not going to take the edge off this wonderful surprise by saying any more than that; but, if you have honestly enjoyed my letters from Washington as much as you say you have—well—just wait until you get the ones from Europe, and see how much pleasure you get then! Remember that I'm going to be thinking of you constantly, and with the deepest affection. The first letter that I wrote from Washington as a senator's wife was to 339 you; the last one which I shall write from here for a long time is, you see, also to you. And in between, as you ought to know, you have never been long out of my thoughts. You will not be out of them, either, when I am treading the pavements of the Eternal City, or dashing through the Boulevards of Paris, sailing over the Lake of Geneva or proving that castles in Spain can come true! In as far as possible, I want you to see them all with me, and I shall never stop trying to have you. Usually I sign my letters "Much love, as ever." But this one is going to you with

*More love than ever!*

Always affectionately yours, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

(I)

THE END

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