

Women Who Christened Our Sea Fighters Plan to Provide for the Comfort of the Sailors and to Protect the Families They Leave Behind

AMERICAN women, as was to be expected, are responding splendidly to the call of the hour, and their desire to help the nation in its great task is making itself manifest in many directions. Nothing is more suggestive of this spirit than the programme marked out for itself by the Society of Sponsors of the United States Navy.

Those familiar with the upbuilding of our battle squadrons can easily recall how really casual in the years gone the sponsor's honor seemed upon the occasion of each launching, the pronouncement of the ship's name and the breaking of a baptismal bottle, being the sum total of the ceremonial. Not only that, the service loomed comparatively small because of the magnitude of the engineering task represented in the craft's structure and her successful transfer from her building blocks to her destined element.

No wonder then that a captious critic remarked that the Society of Sponsors seemed principally engaged in trying to find an excuse for existence. But the society has found not an excuse but a good reason for being, and all because a woman's imaginative mind saw more than the material things of the moment of launching.

The founder of the organization felt that the women of the nation honored by selection for the naming ceremony were thus knit to the cause of the navy by a spiritual tie that could easily manifest itself in a potent influence for substantial good. Having sponsored or mothered the ship, as it were, she deemed it her duty and likewise that of her fellow members to see to it that the vessels and their personnel should henceforth be objects of their patriotic concern. It is not strange then that the society should adopt for its motto, Capt. James Lawrence's dying appeal to the crew of the Chesapeake: "Don't give up the ship!"

In the course of the last four years the society has grown steadily in strength and in fervor, and none of the members reflect this purposeful attitude more than Mrs. Reynolds T. Hall, who is now serving her second hard working term as president of the organization. Four years ago she was asked, "What may the Society of Sponsors do?" And her answer is well worth quoting at some length. Mrs. Hall said:

"The Society of Sponsors may with propriety, within its proper sphere, assist in establishing a more impressive ceremony of bestowing the name upon a naval vessel. Many beautiful customs have been carefully thrown aside by Americans, but there is now a growing sentiment in favor of restoring proper dignity of ceremonials. Sponsors may appropriately take interest in creating sentiment for the perpetuation on our navy lists of the names of our most famous vessels, which, if continued in association with our national life, would be continuous inspiration to our country and to our navy."

Many times the question whether our ships should be baptized with wine or water has degenerated into useless discussion not unified with solemn zeal, and the disputants, well knit without exception, have failed to recognize that they were squabbling over the perpetuation of an ancient pagan practice which was stripped of all religious significance when either of the sacramental elements was omitted or either or both were bestowed with secular hands. The Society of Sponsors wanted to change essentially that.

Mrs. Hall and Miss Edith Benham, secretary-treasurer of the society, when delving for historical data for their valuable book, covering the launchings of our naval vessels from the earliest days down, came upon a prayer offered at the launching of the U. S. S. Princeton at the Philadelphia Navy Yard in 1843. In all the records of the United States navy searched by them they found no other instance of any religious participation in the launching ceremonies. The prayer of 1843, then voiced by the Rev. Dr. Studdards, has since been somewhat remodelled and amplified and adopted by the Society of Sponsors, and its use was authorized for the first time at the launching of the U. S. Oklahoma on March 21, 1917.

It is not necessary here to repeat the prayer in its entirety, but there is something exceedingly timely and appropriate in a portion of it. How much so can be appreciated by the following paragraphs: "May the vessels of our navy be guarded by Thy gracious providence and care. May they not bear the sword in vain, but as the minister of God be a terror to those who do evil and a defence to those who do well. "Graciously bless the officers and men of our navy. May love of coun-

try be engraven on their hearts and may their adventurous spirits and severe toils be duly appreciated by a grateful nation; may their lives be precious in Thy sight, and if ever our ships of war should be engaged in battle grant that their struggles may be only under an enforced necessity for the defence of what is right. "Bless all nations and kindreds on the face of the earth and hasten the time when the principles of holy religion shall so prevail that none shall wage war any more for the purpose of aggression and none shall need it as a means of defence. "So much for the past labors of the Society of Sponsors. Now for the work that the members are bent upon doing in order to show in a material way how thoroughly determined they are to stick by the ships that they have baptized. It must be remembered that a great many of these women have been chosen as sponsors because of the ties that bind them to the names now perpetuated, especially in our torpedo boat and destroyer flotillas. This is also true in the cases of other of our fighting craft, and in consequence naval heroes have in these women living representatives filled with a patriotic desire to do something worth while and worthy of their inheritance. During the month just passed Mrs. Reynolds T. Hall issued the following proclamation and appeal to her sister sponsors:

"A war cloud has arisen over our country. We trust the war cloud will not burst. If the war cloud should burst are sponsors of our navy ships prepared to do their bit? "The Society of Sponsors in annual meeting tendered services to the President of the United States and the Navy Department in case of need. "The President has replied thanking the society for patriotism. "The Secretary of the Navy has replied thanking the society for willingness to cooperate at a time of possible national stress. "Will every sponsor encourage the men of our navy by active interest in the navy and in the welfare of navy children? "Will every sponsor help to make possible immediate and definite services to our country's navy by the Society of Sponsors? "Fortunately the Society of Sponsors has already laid plans to do its bit of national service in war—or in peace. "Well begun is half done, and the society needs only to arouse itself to immediately along easy lines to consummate preparations for immediate service if called upon. "The society's beautiful plan • • • • that sponsors of navy ships all over our country unite as sponsors for one or more of our navy's orphaned children, orphaned in war or peace, cannot be improved upon nor be too highly commended as national service. Before describing what the sponsors are doing now for the men of the combatant ships, recognition should be given their earnest efforts to promote the national defence upon the sea. Early and late these women have labored in that cause and to good effect. How thoroughly imbued they have

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MRS. ARTHUR T. SUTCLIFFE, CHAIRMAN, NORTHEASTERN CHAPTER.



MRS. JOSEPHUS DANIELS, VICE PRESIDENT.



MRS. REYNOLD T. HALL, PRESIDENT.



MRS. LEWIS UNDERWOOD, HONORARY LIFE PRESIDENT.

A WOMAN IN BIG BUSINESS TELLS SECRET OF SUCCESS

SEVERAL years ago a young woman came to New York determined to win one of the big prizes of business. She had the equipment one is familiar with as belonging to the business woman of the moment; the alert glance, the quick step, the ready, genial word and the attractive mien, the manner best described by men who say "she looks as if she could take care of herself." She had proved herself practically in several ventures of a business nature undertaken in cities of the middle West. By gradual elimination and comparison she had found that the big prizes of life are only obtained by big ventures and she had prominently the spirit of the venturesome. So she came to New York. She is Miss Elsie Calder and now she holds an important place with the Bush Terminal Company.

Situated in what the French call a dédale, a cobweb of intricate, circuitous streets that cross each other and turn and turn about impudently, is a strange looking building, so like a chapel that you pass and re-pass it before you are convinced that it is the office building you are in search of. It is a four story structure of Gothic architecture. Bridge, Front and Pearl streets, which bound it, have never been noted for their architectural beauties and, by the law of contrast, this building gives you the impression at once of a constructive force associated with it which does not stop at the merely practical and utilitarian.

In this framing is located the office of Miss Elsie; the entire building is an administrative one. As you sink into an easy chair note the green in the window boxes, the vase of flowers ringing out of heaps of typewritten documents, you say:

"How did you happen to fall into this?" With a smile, Miss Ried says, "One doesn't fall into positions of this kind, one climbs," and she might have added, using her own career as proof, that when one reaches a top rung on the ladder it is not merely a matter of accomplishment but of hanging on. Adorning the wall of her office is an etching, by Earle Horter, which shows a tiny one story warehouse at the end of a grassy green pier. This was the bequest left by a Brooklyn man to his sons, and from this beginning has grown, in a short space of time as such enterprises go, the Terminal City.

To-day there are 200 acres on which stand 123 warehouses, twenty-five miles of railroad tracks, with piers where steamships bound to or coming from all parts of the world load and discharge their cargoes; there are 200 tenants, and 2,000 outside concerns use its advantages, factories, industrial buildings and numberless experiments and finished results in every kind of efficiency work—a sum total not perhaps surprising in itself, for New York is a city of big enterprises, but surprising when it is considered that a woman holds an important position in the affairs of it.

Two or three times a week are held conferences, at which is transacted the business of this enterprise. There is a council of three, which is the final court of appeal. This council is composed of Irving Bush, the president; B. G. Simons, vice-president and treasurer, and Miss Ried, secretary. Nothing is accomplished at these meetings without her cooperation; no problem is presented and disposed of that is not passed upon by her.

On the letter files of a Broadway house, which had written to another concern asking it to secure Miss Ried's services in building up a certain constructive work, is the following tribute:

"Her efforts are all constructive and she will bring to the masculine element just the proper balance of feminine judgment which will work for harmony in a club of this kind. "At Bush Terminal she is recognized as a picker and a builder of men and there is no appeal once her judgment is passed. "One of her fellow workers at Bush told me once that in addition to being the biggest business man of his acquaintance she had the distinctively feminine assets of tact and intuition, which gave her a recognized 'managing start' on the rest of them. And she has meant more to me than I could ever detail to you or our company."

Miss Ried's achievements suggest the question: "Naturally an organization of this kind is never satisfied. What is a reawakening of interest in this all over the country. This new thirty story building of ours is to be devoted entirely to the need that is present so insistent.

"There are approximately 10,000 department stores in the United States. At least twice a year, possibly three times, representatives from these establishments come to New York. Often the representatives are members of the firm. They have tried in the past to cover the whole industrial field of New York in a few days; they haven't been able to do it. It can't be done without organization of the proper kind. We are going to give them that organization. "Samples from every manufactory in the United States are to be on exhibit here. The whole output of our vast country will be centralized so that time, money and strength may be saved. "The entire mezzanine floor is to be turned into a club to which only members can be admitted, the last word in men's clothes; and if there is a class of people who know good service from bad it is this class. "Some time ago the Curtis Publishing Company of Philadelphia gathered statistics and published the fact that 75 per cent. of the purchasing power of the country is controlled by women. These figures were so astounding that they were afterward investigated by two other business houses and were verified. So it may be unnecessary to state that the business women representing the several establishments who keep closely in touch with New York will be taken care of. "There was a time when to be a saleswoman was considered rather inferior; to-day when a woman finds herself offered or wishes to make a livelihood she turns to this as being one of the best paying fields open to her, which it is. It is getting to be one of the most difficult. "Miss Ried speaks on this subject with authority. She is chairman of the Women's Salesmanship Club of New York, 1,000 in Philadelphia, approximately that number in Atlanta, and in several other principal cities a growing number. In the letter quoted above Miss Ried is said to be a picker of men. It is one of her duties to find in the Bush Terminal the man who is mainly trying to fit his rounded proportions into a rectangular space. The policy of this enterprise does not include the human scrap heap. "When we lose a man," she explains, "we feel that we are the more inefficient. "We commence with the office boy. Every lad in our employ is in the beginning a selection, not a chance applicant. He is then on probation for

several months. He is not interfered with or spied upon, but we know at the end of a stated period exactly what he stands for. "We assume in the beginning of course that he is honest and industrious, but those qualities are not enough; he must be ambitious to take advantage of the opportunities the company offers him and to show the results. There is no such thing as a status quo here. Out of every office boy we hope to make some day the head of a department of a leader of some kind. That is why we consider the office boy an important investment. "I heard the other day of an office boy in a big industry who was discharged because he hadn't lined up to the requirements. The boy went directly to the president and politely, cop in hand, said, 'Look here, Mr. President, you're making a great mistake in discharging me.' "The president didn't know who he was, but listened, and the boy continued: "You see, if I go now you lose the investment of your time and money. That isn't good business. I'm slow, but I'll get there. I've figured out it'll take me two months more." "He was given two months more and at the end of that time had made good, as he had said he would, and he has an assured future in that very establishment that would have let him go.

"We don't want to make similar mistakes. "We have another plank in our platform, that is, we do not believe in departmental walls. It is our desire to do away entirely with the barriers which are created, sometimes artificially, sometimes automatically—I mean the theory that the best results are obtained when the workers in one section are ignorant of the work outside of their own division. "I might analyze such qualities as these; Irving Bush is a deer, but he is also a dreamer; no man could have built Terminal City out of a tiny warehouse and a grassy pier in the few years he took for its accomplishment who was not by habit a dreamer. Mr. Simons has the appreciation of others' visions and the practical mind that can help to carry them into effect; I believe that I have some of both qualities; a little power of vision, a little power of efficient action and the God-given one of intuition, supplemented by tact, which is the social or commercial reading of this possession. "The silent force of woman's assistance has always been a factor in men's lives, but it has been in many generations a secret as well as a silent factor. Men like Mr. Bush, and there are a few, are pioneers in that they give women due credit for all that they do, a credit which they now desire, although in the past I judge that they were satisfied with what they got and if not did not complain. "Then why is it," asked the interviewer at this point, "that there are

so few big women in the business world to-day that their presence in it is still a topic of interest and study? "Frankly I believe the same handicaps that existed when women first came downtown exists today; they do not take their work seriously enough. "There is terrific competition everywhere. Woman can rank the man only on the man's basis; she must be equally efficient, equally courageous, able to offer the standing strain in which men are physiologically our superiors by a balance of fitness and diplomacy. The young woman who is thinking of a possible husband, the wife who is worried about children and home cares, cannot have the courage and creative work to allow myself to set my mind with the data that I pay a secretary \$12 a week to keep track of. "Mr. Bush always admits that you have a point—when you have it. "That, reply demanded courage. I hated to say it, but I had to place myself forever in his esteem outside the mass of women who pride themselves on always having the ready answer, whose minds are so encumbered with the non-essentials that they have no space for essentials. I don't despise the courage, but if you think always of the comma, not of the subject matter, your mind will not have the wider reach for its own good."



MISS ELSIE CALDER, ONE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

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