

THE
W O M E N
O F
A M E R I C A

BY
ELIZABETH MCCRACKEN

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

M C M I V

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

COPYRIGHT 1903
BY THE OUTLOOK CO.

COPYRIGHT 1904
BY THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

—

SET UP AND ELECTROTYPED. PUBLISHED NOVEMBER, 1904

TO MY SISTER
ANNIE L. TOWNE

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
The Pioneer Woman of the West	3
II. The Woman in the Small Town	29
III. The Southern Woman and Re- construction	57
IV. Woman's Suffrage in Colorado .	85
V. The Woman in her Club . . .	115
VI. The Woman from the College .	145
VII. The Woman in the Play . . .	173
VIII. The American Woman of Letters	203
IX. Women and Philanthropy . . .	231
X. The School-Teacher	259

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
XI. The Mother in the Tenement	
Home	287
XII. The Woman on the Farm	313
XIII. Women in the Professions	343
XIV. The Social Ideals of American Women	371

PREFACE

IN the autumn of 1902, at the request of The Outlook Company, I began the long journey so frequently mentioned in the following pages. The purpose of the journey was an investigation, as nearly complete as the brief time at command should permit, of the ideals and achievements of American women—in the professions, in municipal affairs, in the arts, and, above all, in the home and things pertaining to home-making.

Even at the very beginning of my travels, this object had appeared to me sufficiently large to give soberness to the glowing enthusiasm with which I entered upon my task: but, as my journey, with its multiplicity of new and unexpected experiences assumed proportions far beyond its originally planned

P R E F A C E

limits, so also did its purpose grow in breadth and in depth of meaning; with this difference: that, whereas my travels eventually were ended, my investigation increasingly seemed merely to have been begun. One of my friends to whom before leaving New York I confided the object of my quest, exclaimed: "It isn't an especially small object!" And, even while I agreed with her, I could not refrain from adding: "It is related to a not particularly small subject!"

In a journey extending over very nearly the entire United States, and occupying only six months in time, but little beyond observations of the subject, too often hasty and not infrequently casual, could be made. Almost at the very outset, I realized that if I devoted the few days which were all I usually was able to spend even in a city of great size, to collecting statistics concerning the women of that city and their occupations, I should be obliged to forego the more vivid advantage of personal meetings with these women, and personal visits to the actual scenes of those occupations. Whenever, therefore, it became necessary to choose between an experience, however minute, and a report of that experience, however comprehensive, I almost in-

P R E F A C E

variably chose the former. The choice, to be sure, was usually more involuntary than premeditated; a woman appealed to me so much more keenly than did an account of her attainments; a glimpse of her work had for me far more interest than any report of its processes possibly could have.

Statistics and reports, it is true, I did gather in great abundance. But, when finally, my journey, if not my investigation, was quite finished, and I began to write an account of its happenings and discoveries, I found that, not my note-books with their arrays of figures, not the pamphlets and calendars with which my trunk was well-nigh filled, but the memories of the women whom I had met comprised the significant, and the real, results of my travels.

A little white pearl button, from a baby's cloak, held more suggestions of the lives of women on remote Western ranches than were contained in all my laboriously acquired statistics. A small purple flower, from a pine-grown mountain-side in Oregon, falling one day from between the pages of the volume of Keats which had borne me company in that far-away country, recalled more definitely to my mind those women whom I had met

P R E F A C E

on farms, than the ample reports with which I was furnished.

And so it has happened that when I have in the forth-coming pages, used my note books at all, I have used them only as backgrounds, trusting that to my readers, as to me, people are more interesting than things, and that the comparatively few women of whom I have written in these chapters may prove to them more appealing than would such statistical accounts of a larger number of women as I, after a so short preparation, could have made.

As often was said to me, my object was not small. For that assistance in its pursuance, lacking which I could scarcely have so much as begun my happy labor, my thanks are due to many persons; first of all, and most of all, to the editorial staff of *The Outlook*, and the members of *The Outlook Company* for whose courtesy, kindness, generosity, and loyalty it would be difficult to find adequate words of appreciation; next, to all my old friends, who helped me with a sweet and unwearied zest which was in itself a lovely and a constant inspiration; last, but by no means least, to those many, many new friends and acquaintances with whom I met along the way of my far

P R E F A C E

journey ; their patience, their ready sympathy and their gracious hospitality, it would not be possible to remember too gratefully.

And now, it only remains for me to bid farewell—somewhat affectionately—to my chapters and to express the hope that, because they are few and brief, they may find the reader like the reader of olden times—
“gentle.”

E. M.

Arlington, Massachusetts,
November, 1904.