Helen Hamilton Gardener (Alice Chenoweth Day), 1853-1925

BIOGRAPHY

Alice Chenoweth was born at Winchester, Virginia, January 21, 1853. She was the daughter of Reverend Alfred Griffith and Katherine A. (Peele) Chenoweth.

When she was one year of age her parents moved from Virginia to Washington, D.C., and three years later to Indiana. A story of her childhood appears in Mrs. Gardeners's book “An Unofficial Patriot.”

Her early education was gained from tutors. She was graduated from a Cincinnati high school and the Ohio State Normal School and did post-graduate work at Columbia University.

She began teaching at the age of nineteen in the Ohio State Normal School and for two years was principal of the school.

She married Selden Smart at the age of twenty-two; her husband died twenty-five years after.

From 1875 to 1900 she made her home in New York City and during that period wrote magazine articles, stories, and books. Many of her magazine articles and short stories written then were later grouped in books published under the titles “Facts and Fictions of Life,” “Pushed by Unseen Hands,” and “A Thoughtless Yes.”

She took legally the pen name of Helen Hamilton Gardener and all her public work and writings appear under that name. It was her conviction that a woman should take sole responsibility for her work and achievement and not lean upon family name or connection for recognition. Her failures
and mistakes, also, she felt she and not her relatives should bear. Her whole life conformed to her conviction that a woman should “stand on her own feet.”

Some of her early public work was in connection with the higher education of women; she made a fight for the right of women to high-school and college training; and from that she went into the contest for the age of protection for children.

In 1902, Mrs. Gardener married Colonel Selden Allen Day of the United States Army. Upon Colonel Day's retirement from active service, they spent six years making a tour of the world. She was invited to lecture at many of the universities in Japan, France, England, and Italy. She visited twenty countries making a comparative study of “Ourselves and Other Peoples,” collecting pictures and data, and upon returning to the United States gave illustrated university extension lectures under the title quoted.

She was decorated by the governments of France and Japan for her public work. She held the Peace Medal of France for her book “An Unofficial Patriot,” which Baron de Estronelles de Constant, of the Hague, said was a book that “went all the way to peace,” and of which Senator John Sharp William said “it contained the best verbal portrait of Abraham Lincoln to be found in our literature.”

Mrs. Gardener was the author of seven books, namely, “Facts and Fictions of Life,” “Is This Your Son, My Lord?,” which she called “the first shot fired for the single standard of morals”; “Pray You, Sir, Whose Daughter?,” a plea for laws to protect children against their own ignorance; “Pushed by Unseen Hands,” “A Thoughtless Yes,” “Sex in Brain,” and “An Unofficial Patriot.” The last-named was dramatized and played by James A. Herne under the title “Griffith Davenport.”

One of the best-known and the greatest of Mrs. Gardener's writings is “Sex in Brain.” A prominent physician had made the statement that the brain of a woman was inferior in nineteen different ways to the brain of a man. He claimed to be able to prove this by microscope and scales on the brain mass itself. Mrs. Gardener, doubting the truth of this statement, spent many months studying brain anatomy under the guidance of some of the leading specialists of the country and convinced these doctors and herself that it could not be proved that the brain mass of a woman was different from that of a man under the same conditions and with the same opportunities for development. She thereupon wrote on her finding of facts and called the article “Sex in Brain.” It was published in the medical journals of this country and translated into eight other languages as fundamental work. In this work she was sustained by leading alienists of America and Germany, namely, E. C. Spitzka of New York, and Mendel of Germany.
About the year 1888 she took up the struggle for equal suffrage. She was closely associated with Susan B. Anthony, Anna Howard Shaw, Elizabeth Stanton, and Carrie Chapman Catt, leaders in the suffrage movement. Later, when she moved from New York to Washington, the National Capital became her principal field of activity and the equal-suffrage leaders grew to look upon her as “the diplomatic corps” of the organization. She was elected a vice president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association and vice chairman of its Congressional Committee. She was credited with having done much toward securing the amendment to the Constitution giving women the franchise. It was she who maintained friendly relations between the National American Woman Suffrage Association and the White House and Congress.

On April 13, 1920, she took office as the first woman member of the United States Civil Service Commission. The appointment came to her wholly unsolicited; as she expressed it, “out of the clear sky.” President Wilson submitted the nomination to the Senate, where it was unanimously confirmed.

The United States Civil Service Commission is composed of three members, “not more than two of whom shall be adherents of the same party.” At the time of Mrs. Gardener’s appointment, the president of the Commission was Martin A. Morrison, of Indiana, and the second member, George R. Wales, of Vermont. In July, 1921, the resignation of Mr. Morrison was accepted by President Harding and ex-Governor John H. Bartlett of New Hampshire was appointed to succeed him as president of the Commission. In March, 1922, Mr. Bartlett resigned to take up the duties of First Assistant Postmaster General, and on March 30, 1923, William C. Deming, of Wyoming, took office as president of the Commission. Mr. Wales and Mr. Deming served as Mrs. Gardener’s colleagues continuously from the last-named date.

On April 13, 1923, Mrs. Gardener celebrated the third anniversary of her appointment as a member of the Commission. She presented a carnation to each of the four hundred employees of the Commission, accompanied by this characteristic note of greeting:

“I want to extend to each and every employee of the Commission my greetings on this, the third anniversary of my work with and for you. I hope that not one of you feels that you are worse off because I have been a Commissioner, and I also sincerely hope that at least a few of you feel that my being here has been of real service both to you and to the Government.

“It has been three years of hard work for me but there has been a joy in believing that I have helped a little in the direction of good government. I have learned a new respect for the conscientious government employee and have gained added indignation and contempt for the slackers and for
those who take their civic obligations lightly, who serve their government with one eye on the clock and the other on their pay check.

“Character in government employees is quite as important as is character in government officials. In the one instance it is shown in large things and in the other in smaller ones.

“I am proud of our force and I thank you for your co-operation. May our fourth year be as happy as the three that are past.

“The carnations are for good will and good cheer.”

On this occasion the employees of the Commission presented Commissioner Gardener with a basket of flowers as a token of their hearty good will and esteem.

Mrs. Gardener would not permit any one to say that she was a “feminist”; she herself stoutly proclaimed that she stood for equal opportunities for men and women.

Her long executive experience did not lessen her gracious charm of manner nor otherwise alter her lovable personality.

She died at Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, D. C., on July 26, 1925.

TRIBUTES BY FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES By WILLIAM C. DEMING

[The funeral services for Mrs. Gardener were held in the afternoon of Tuesday, July 28, 1925, at her late home, 1838 Lamont Street N. W., Washington, D. C. Mrs. Gardener had requested that there be no religious ceremony, and the services were in charge of William C. Deming, President of the United States Civil Service Commission. Mr. Deming said:]

Friends:

We have assembled here to pay a last tribute of love and respect to Mrs. Helen H. Gardener, a member of the United States Civil Service Commission. This informal ceremony is in accord with the written request of the deceased. She expressed a wish that her colleagues upon the Commission and her close personal friends, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt and Mrs. Maud Wood Park, make a few remarks.
I regret that Commissioner Wales, who is absent from Washington, was unable to return for the
funeral. He has not been well and has expressed his deep sorrow. Mr. Wales has written the family
and the Commission that he considers Mrs. Gardener's death an irreparable loss to the classified
civil service.

I first met Mrs. Gardener when I became a member of the Civil Service Commission. Her kindly,
genial companionship and her willingness to assist me placed us upon a very easy footing, and that
companionship and friendship grew and strengthened each day. I recall how naturally she said to me
after I had become a member, “The public does not discriminate between a new commissioner and
one who has had experience. There is a great code of principles and precedents, so if I can give you
the benefit at any time of my own efforts and observations it may save you some anxious 8 hours.”
Her advice and cooperation were cheerfully given and as cheerfully received.

Mrs. Gardener's long experience as an author, lecturer, student, and laborer for the common good,
and especially in the cause of women, qualified her for high duties and responsibilities. She was both
generous and just. She possessed one of the best minds I have ever known. She reasoned with great
accuracy, and was resourceful in any situation. Her memory for details, even to the closing days of
her life, was remarkably clear. Her sense of humor was spontaneous.

I think I have never known anyone who with so little ostentation did so much for others. She
believed in the Oriental motto that “He who gives has all things, and he who withholds has nothing.”
To the many women of the Commission, and others who called on her, she was as a mother, sister,
and friend. She devoted her public life to the cause of women and her immediate personal activities
to her family and friends.

Her selection as a member of the United States Civil Service Commission abundantly justified the
precedent then set of choosing a woman to occupy a place upon that igh body.

Her years rested so lightly upon her shoulders that she had up to her last serious illness the vigor of
a woman of fifty and the enthusiasm and interest in life of a schoolgirl. Around the conference table
of the Civil Service Commission she was an interesting study because when the occasion demanded
she could be a stern as well as a just judge. She had little or no patience or sympathy with chronic
offenders against the civil service law. It sometimes seemed to me that she could add six inches to
her short stature when she lifted her shoulders and raised her head in asking a pertinent question.
Withal she brought to the Commission a woman's tenderness and a woman's intuition.

She exercised great breadth of vision, and there was an entire absence of prejudice in the discharge
of her official duties. She made no distinction between North and South, East and West, or between
parties or factions; but she was especially alert in seeing that no rightful opportunity belonging to women was overlooked in the service and that the "under dog," regardless of his creed or color, had his day in court.

Her home, as many of us know, was a perpetual delight and she made it cheerful even in her illness.

Of her it may be said, "She lived in deeds, not words; in heart throbs, not in figures on the dial." Her courage and optimism abided through her long illness. Her last words Saturday evening to her niece, Miss Helen Crane, her secretary, Miss Rena Smith, and our librarian, Miss Anna Holdridge, when they were leaving her, were "Goodnight, children." She said it as naturally and as happily as if she would see them again. That was her way. She always made things easy for those around her.

Just as she was courageous in life, she faced bravely the Great Unknown. In keeping with the eternal fitness of things, the end did not come to her in the dark, still watches of the night. She passed away peacefully in her sleep after a glorious sunrise.

If in the unrevealed scheme of the universe there is yet service to be rendered and good cheer to be spread, the dauntless, diligent, and generous spirit of Helen Gardener will go marching on.

By GEORGE R. WALES

It was my privilege to serve on the United States Civil Service Commission as a colleague of Helen Hamilton Gardener for a period of more than five years. They were years when the contraction of the Federal service following the World War brought many difficult problems to the Commission for solution.

When Martin A. Morrison, president of the Commission at the time, and I heard that it was the President's purpose to appoint a woman to the Commission, it was natural that we should be interested in the selection, especially as a woman had never held the office; and when, after meeting Mrs. Gardener, we discovered that the President had chosen the woman, we were more than satisfied.

Commissioner Gardener, upon her assumption of office, immediately and easily made it understood by her colleagues and the office force that she was not officially to be treated as a woman, but as a Commissioner; anything that should be presented to a Commissioner should be presented frankly to her. She approached every question with an open mind. Always graciously, and yet with full use
of the power resting in the office of Civil Service Commissioner, Mrs. Gardener stood for the rights of persons, men and women alike, and not women alone. She insisted on justice in employment relationships, and joined in every effort for the adoption by Government officials of enlightened personnel policies.

In Commissioner Gardener's presence one had a sense of gracious and unhurried ease. Her friends have rightly acclaimed her notable achievements in three lines of activity; first as an educator, then as a writer, and last as a United States Civil Service Commissioner. Through her success in each of these fields she enjoyed to a marked degree the acquaintance and confidence of public man, in Congress and elsewhere, irrespective of party affiliations; and this was a distinct asset to the Civil Service Commission.

I pay but poor tribute in saying that through Commissioner Gardener's death the Civil Service Commission has suffered an almost irreparable loss.

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By MARTIN A. MORRISON

I was at my summer home in Virginia when the news came to me that a fellow member of the Civil Service Commission had resigned and gone back to the legal profession.

The question of who is to be a new commissioner may not amount to much with the general public, but it is a big question in the minds of the other two commissioners and of the men and women engaged in the work of the Commission.

Then came the nomination and the confirmation, and then we met Mrs. Gardener. Of course, my first thought was of the work of the Commission.

That was a time when the Commission needed to be better understood; somebody was needed to tell the truth, somebody able to tell it in a different way, to sent it out with new force. Mrs. Gardener came to the Commission with just the equipment, just the disposition, that would have been provided had her appointment been providential.

Of course, it took a little while to learn each other's ideas. In our friendly conversations, I soon began to learn something of old Virginia before the war, of the conditions that could not have meant a great deal in her life then but which evidently made such an impression with her as to affect her after life.
I learned of a father who had been gripped by a conviction, who sold what he had and with his children crossed the line into the District of Columbia, emancipated the slaves which had come to him as heritage, and left them to work out their salvation. He freed them and gave them the last of the savings of his life. Then he went to my State. Indiana, a sort of pioneer, and there the family lived the lives of pioneer heroes.

The war came and his boys went to do their part. There came a time when the man in the White House had been told that there was one man out in Indiana who knew the Old Dominion, who knew its woods, its rivers, its roads, all about it; and that the war was being prolonged because the armies had no such man.

And then the son of old Virginia, the emigrant to Indiana, 14 found himself standing in the presence of Abraham Lincoln, the man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, who laid on this man, unofficially, the duty of guiding the Union armies in the Old Dominion, in order that the strife might end, and he undertook and performed this service.

There is your background—things that are big and deep. You have been told that, as a schoolgirl almost, she was head of an institution of learning. And then with this background of ancestry, and with inborn convictions for the right, she looked upon a world in which she saw many injustices. She undertook to study them first, to know what she was about, and then to write that men and woman might know what, if any, was the remedy. She entered the field of scientific though, she became a real investigator, she reduced the investigation of the things of the world to an exact science and a fine art; and when she had learned, she wrote the things that ought to have been written; she did the things that she thought ought to be done.

All of this had passed when I first met her, just before she took the oath of office as a member of the Civil Service Commission. All of this had contributed toward her splendid character. She came to the Commission with a mind that worked like a piece of delicate machinery, a heart as big as the universe.

She reached out and acquired technical knowledge almost overnight. It was not long before I understood how a character such as hers and experiences such as hers make people who are able to do great things in a great way and who are not able to do otherwise.

I cannot talk about the work of the Commission; time forbids. Those who knew her need no information as to how Helen Gardener conducted herself as a member of the Civil Service Commission.
It was Daniel Webster, as I recall, who said, “The past at least is secure.” If one ventures to think of the future, by what standard may one judge it? By the logic of my blood, by the faith of my ancestors, the faith they bequeathed to me, I knew that a life that has a past that is secure cannot have a future that is insecure. All who knew Helen Gardener know that her past is secure. Her future must be.

By MRS. MAUD WOOD PARK

It is not quite eight years since I first had the inestimable privilege of knowing Helen—Gardener, —She was then sixty-four years old. she had lived a full and varied personal life, with the joy of family ties, the responsibilities of a household, the pleasures of many friends, of wide reading and of prolonged travel. For most women this personal life would have made up a well-rounded career, but for her it had been only a background for the success which she achieved in three different professions, as an educator, a writer, and a lecturer. Before she was twenty she had been placed at the head of a normal school, and though her period of formal teaching was cut short by her early first marriage, her desire and ability to teach were shown in much of her writing and in all her lectures.

We who knew her only in the later years often failed to realize her important contribution to American letters. One of her essays, “Sex in Brain,” inspired by her life-long eagerness to secure justice for women, was translated into many languages and started scientific research to establish the fact that there is no difference in the brain structure of men and of women. Several of her early and popular novels were dramatic expositions of the need of a single standard of sex morals, again a manifestation of her longing for justice for women. Her story “An Unofficial Patriot,” which was drawn from the experience of her father, the Reverend Alfred Griffith Chenoweth, and which has been said by eminent historians to give the most striking portrayal in literature of Abraham Lincoln, she dramatized in collaboration with James A. Herne. Under the name of “Griffith Davenport,” the play is listed by no less an authority than William Archer as one of the foremost American dramas.

After such achievement it would have seemed that at sixty-four there remained only what are called “the declining years” of inactivity and the slow failure of the vital forces, 16 but for here there was still to come her invaluable service in the final legislative stage of the long struggle for woman suffrage; and, after the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment, she was destined, as the first woman appointed to the United States Civil Service Commission, to make a distinguished record in a wholly new direction—that of public official in one of the highest positions under the Federal Government. Others will tell you how at sixty-eight she mastered the involved technique of that new
profession; how she won the esteem and affection of the other members of the Commission and of the large staff which the Commission directs; how she maintained the respect of the United States Senate, by which her appointment had been unanimously confirmed, and of the members of the House of Representatives, with whom her work brought her into frequent contact; how she inspired and kept the confidence of President Wilson, by whom she was appointed, and President Harding and President Coolidge, under whom she continued to serve. Others will tell you, how she strove to secure fair opportunity for women in government employ and how she set a standard of devotion and unswerving integrity in public office. It was a tremendous achievement and it marks, as she longed to have it mark, a great milestone in the path of the progress of women.

My own closest work with her came during the three years that led up to the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment. Only a few of us will ever know in detail how much the women of the United States own her for what she did at that time. Throughout her life, as I have said, justice for women had been the cause for which she cared most. She had furthered that cause in many ways, but here incomparable service, a service which no one else could possibly have rendered, came in the months when the efforts of the suffragists were centered upon the Congress of the United State. The her knowledge of men in public life, her familiarity with official custom and legislative procedure, combined with her rare gifts of person and mind and character, made her the most potent factor inn securing the passage of the Amendment by the Congress. Although she was in frail health for much of the time and had to bear the sad responsibility of her husband's 17 long illness and death, she ever refused to respond to our many requests for advise and help and never neglected a commission that she had once undertaken. In the Congressional Committee of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, of which she was vice-chairman, we used to call her “the diplomatic corps,” because her extraordinary tact made numberless powerful friends for the cause and her manifest sincerity held their support to the end. In the nature of the case much of her work was confidential and cannot be made known for a generation. I can say only that when at crucial moments aid came from high places so unexpectedly that it seemed miraculous we knew that Helen Gardener's work had brought its accustomed fruits.

She was a vice-president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association and her last speech was in May at a reunion of suffrage workers, when her subject was “Our Honored Dead.” Seeing her then so young in appearance, so eloquent and apparently so vigorous, we did not dream that she herself was soon to take her high place among the brave souls to whom the women of this country owe their enfranchisement.

It is not easy to analyze the sources of her greatness. Perhaps one of them was a balance of characteristics that are usually opposed. She was essentially feminine and enjoyed to the full the
pleasures of social intercourse and all the dainty accessories of living that belong with a personality as exquisite as hers. She was an admirable housekeeper, a devoted wife, a loyal kinswoman, a hospitable and affectionate friend. But underneath her charming and delicate surface lay a mind like finely tempered steel, a judicial, impersonal mind, untrammelled by conventional bonds, far-sighted, courageous. And deeper still there lay noble purposes and unflinching obedience to their demands.

Her extraordinary tact was based upon profound understanding of the foibles and weaknesses of human nature and of the mixture of motives that guides a large part of human conduct. Yet with all that knowledge she was never bitter or pessimistic. She believed in men and women and in a world of slow but definite progress.

For her Time had seemed to stand aside and even Death was merciful in taking her, as she wished to go, before disease had marred either body or spirit. To us who knew and loved her, the loss is overwhelming. For the country that she served with devotion, a record of splendid achievement remains to guide those who come after her. She was a true and lovely woman with rare ability and profound strength of character.

By MRS. CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT

The hardest task that any human being is called upon to perform is to stand by the side of a friend truly loved and pronounce that last, long good-bye. Ever since there has been a written language among men, the record has been preserved among all races that men have laid away their dead with tender care, and always in the belief and the expectation that they would live again. More, though the reports on men who have dug up buried cities and opened forgotten tombs, we know that for thousands of years before there was any written language, however crude, men laid away their dead in the belief that they would live on. They buried with them food, implements, clothing, and the things that had given them joy in this world in order that they might use them in the next. For thousands of years men have been thinking these things, and, in our day, the accumulated knowledge is enormous, and yet the mystery of why we are here and why we go, from whence we come and whither we go, is all unsolved. There are those who think they know, some through the revealed word of God; some who claims they have spoken with souls who have returned; and yet, after all, the testimony is too inadequate for serious people to believe that anybody positively knows.

This mystery concerning the future of mankind has made most humans afraid to die. I suppose it is the most terrible fear that any human being ever endures and it is well-nigh universal, but Helen...
Gardener was not afraid to die. She was an exception, I believe, to most humans, and in the fact that she was not afraid to die there was a demonstration of what has been to me her most amazing characteristic.

A few weeks ago I had a guest in my house. She was very orthodox. She believed in hell. She believed in all we have been taught concerning it, and she was taken ill, not very ill, but she spent a day in bed. She suffered a terrifying fear of what might come to her. It was at that moment 20 I had a letter from Helen Gardener. In my reply I told her the story of my guest and said, “I am sure you are not afraid to die.” I added, “It seems to me that it is the most orthodox—those who think they know the most about what is coming—who are most afraid.” She wrote again and she said, “No, I am not afraid to die; I never was; I have lived my life as well as I could day by day, and base my future upon my past. Whenever I am called, I am ready, and I always have been ready. Whatever comes, I will accept.” No fear did she have. Why should one have fear for her? Helen Gardener was, to my mind, one of the most all-around courageous human beings I have ever know, and I believe her to have been one of the most courageous of our time.

Everyone seems to be afraid of something, and most people are afraid of a great many things. they are afraid of lightning, bugs, burglars, disease, accidents. As an Irish-woman said. “Those that don't have big things to worry them, let the little ones serve.”

Everybody worries. I have known strong and healthy men, veritable human lions, who could go into battle and give their lives without a tremor, so strong was their physical courage, yet they would turn and flee before a new idea. So afraid of public opinion were they, that at the first threat of opposition, they flew to cover. On the other hand, I have known men who have had enormous moral courage; men willing to stand for a cause though all the world was against them; yet these men have lacked physical courage. I knew one such man who never would go above a second fight of stairs, because he was afraid of heights. I knew another who never dared to cross the seas. I knew another who never would go, willingly, above the second floor because he was afraid of fire. Yet these were men of very exceptional moral courage, men that have won the respect of the whole community in which they lived for their daring espousal of unpopular truths.

One cannot imagine Helen Gardener being afraid of anything, neither of mice, nor caterpillars, nor burglars, nor anything else living or dead, and I am sure that whatever might have come in her life, she would have known exactly what to 21 do and would have done it bravely. Had she lived in the long ago, she might have been a queen, and as such, fearlessly would she have led her armies, just as great generals have done. Had she lived in the future, she would have stood for whatever was then a question of the time. As it was, she lived in this century, and so she gave herself to what
was, during her time, the most controversial of subjects, and that was the so-called emancipation of women.

It is not possible for you to comprehend today how stolid was the resistance to a college education for girls in her early life. One popular reason, first advanced by college professors and passed on to the man in the street, was that the brains of women were smaller that those of men. All the rest of us women answered that charge with the plea “Give us a chance; let us try. Let us see whether you are right or not.” But it was not so with Helen Gardener. I can just imagine her in that youthful spirit saying, as we heard her do so many times in later years, “Let us see about that.” She set about examining and experimenting and studying, to find out whether that charge was really based upon fact or not, and she carried to the task an open and a scientific mind. Just when she gave her conclusions to the world, that the whole theory was based upon insufficient evidence, a professor, let me call him a professor of brains, died, and it was found that his brain measured and weighed less than that of any woman that he had ever examined.

It is not often victory quite so complete ever comes, and that argument, that obstacle, in the way of girls, wholly disappeared. You, who are younger, never me that obstacle; you found the doors open and now it is a forgotten episode; yet Helen Gardener blazed that trail which finally made an open road to college educations for girls.

Mrs. Park has spoken of some of Mrs. Gardener's earlier novels. Long before I met her in person, and I have known her for some thirty years, I had read those books. It is so long ago that I would not now dare to comment upon their literary value, but what I do know is that they appeared at a time when it required great moral courage to write and to publish them. People read them behind closed doors and were hesitant about telling their neighbors what they had been reading and thinking about. It was at a time when the whole world accepted a double standard of morals and when it was not an uncommon thing for the entire family, aided by the community, through a conspiracy of silence, to marry off a rake to an innocent young girl, who was kept ignorant of her fate.

It was in that time that Helen Gardener wrote her novels. “Is This Your Son, My Lord?” and “Pray You Sir, Whose Daughter?” and what she said stirred consciences underneath the surface from the Atlantic to the Pacific. I was amazed when I first saw her to discover how young she was. I marvelled that she dared to shock society in order to make it think. It was that kind of courage that marked her life all the way along. Always did she lead.

I have been thinking of late of that great man who has just passed, and who is to be buried in Arlington too. It is a man's world and he had a leadership among men; and yet when I have reviewed his life—for I knew Mr. Bryan quite well and admired his great power, is sincerity, his marvelous
oratory—it seems to me that he adopted every cause he espoused after someone else had blazed the trail. He then took his place with bold and confident courage and he often assumed leadership. Helen Gardener blazed her own trails, and when she found that things were moving irresistibly as she wished, she moved on and blazed another. I do not think that those who knew her in the latter years of her life realized how masterful she had been, for she was over modest about all of her achievements and said little about them. Her courage was so unusual, in either man or woman, that to me she will always be an unprecedented character, one of the truly great.

Every person, whether man or woman, ought to be born with an instinct to obey the ten commandments, and yet crime rages. When we review those commandments, one by one, we find the most fundamental ones are violated by our best friends. When I say Helen Gardener had an instinct to obey those ten commandments, you may think it is something that one might say about anybody. Oh, no! I have known so few people in my life who tell the truth! It is not because they mean to lie. It is because there is deficiency in memory, a faulty operation of the mind, something not quite alert, that makes them untruthful. Helen Gardener was absolutely truthful. For that reason, I place her as a climax of our race. She lived where we all ought to be and are not.

She was modest, as I have said. No great place, perhaps, will be given to her, but those of us who have known her well, who have known her courage, her morality, her truthfulness, recognize that hers was a majestic character.

In Jerusalem there is a curious ceremony that takes place on Easter Day in the cathedral claiming the tomb of Christ. On that day the great church is crowded with people, each carrying an unlighted candle. At a given time, holy fire is said to pour forth from a tiny window in the tomb. The priests who stand nearest light their candles there and turn to light the candles of those who are nearest them, and these turn and light the candles of their neighbors, until all the candles in the church have been lighted by this holy fire. The whole audience then goes outside where other crowds are waiting with many men on horseback. Everyone carries a candle. When the candles are all alight, the men travel home, on foot, on horseback, and probably now by automobile, in order to light a fire upon the home altars from the Holy Spirit of the cathedral, and it is said altars as far away as Russia, Armenia, and Greece are lighted from that holy flame at Jerusalem.

We may take a figure of that ceremony. Such a character as that of Helen Gardener was like the holy fire, lighting the candles of those less brave, less strong, less intelligent, less truthful, and they in turn lighted those about; and so far do such influences extend, that it is impossible to estimate the good which such a man or woman does in this world. She was not a fundamentalist. She was a liberal, but always tolerant, always progressive. What she gave to the world, no one may know. But those of us
who were privileged to light our candles at her altar do know that now we must carry on. A Great Soul, a White Soul, has passed.

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By RENA B. SMITH

As time goes on Mrs. Gardener will stand out even more clearly than today as a pioneer. She was always a little ahead of her time, and it could not but be a source of gratification to her to see changes and reforms for which she worked take place during her lifetime.

Her philosophy of life was a simple one, but she found it effective and followed it to the end. Her aim always was to give out good—in her thoughts and in her words and acts. That method invariably brought good back to her, she avowed. It was her endeavor never to hurt anyone unnecessarily, either by word or deed. She looked for the best in every human contact and therefore usually found it. To the highest degree she radiated energy, sincerity, and happiness.

She met without fear every situation. If it was one that seemed to need correction, she made an effort to correct it. If her efforts were unfruitful, she accepted that which came, with good cheer and a smile, and profited by the experience. It was remarkable how often she accomplished a needed change quietly and easily without anyone but herself knowing just how it came about.

Her sense of humor never deserted her and it served to lessen the tension in many of the trying situations which must confront one so active in public and social affairs.

I was privileged to know Mrs. Gardener in her home life, where she was always sweet, considerate, and lovable. She was very fond of her home and three could not be a more charming hostess.

She lived her three score years and ten to the fullest, always busy, always accomplishing. It seemed that she had early discovered the secret of eternal youth. She herself attributed the lightness of the touch of years upon her appearance to the fact that she never lived in the past but instead was interested in coming events, preparing herself to meet them.

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As secretary to Commissioner Gardener I was honored by a close association with her for the last five years. In her sweetness of character, she was appreciative to the utmost of the slightest service rendered. She gave freely of her wealth of knowledge and experience, and her attitude was always one of the helpfulness and understanding.
To me she will live always as a true friend, a guide, and an inspiration.

AT REST

In the afternoon of Tuesday, July 28, 1925, persons prominent in official and business life in Washington joined in paying a final tribute to Helen Hamilton Gardener at the funeral services held at her late home, 1838 Lamont Street N. W., Washington, D. C. The offices of the United States Civil Service Commission were closed throughout the day as a mark of honor and respect.

In accordance with the wishes of Mrs. Gardener, expressed a number of times before her death, no religious services were held, but brief eulogies were delivered by her former colleagues, William C. Deming and Martin A. Morrison, and by two of her co-workers for the cause of equal suffrage, Mrs. Maud Wood Park and Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt.

The honorary pallbearers were William C. Deming, Martin A. Morrison, Herbert A. Filer, Dr. John T. Doyle, Colonel Harry E. O'Neill, Rudolph Forster and Joshua Evans, Jr.


Also in accordance with the expressed wish of Mrs. Gardener, the body, excepting the brain, was cremated and the ashes placed in Arlington National Cemetery beside the grave of her husband, Colonel Selden Allen Day, U. S. A., who died in 1918.

Directing the disposition of the brain, Mrs. Gardener left the following written instructions: “Having spent my life in using such brains as I possess in trying to better the conditions of humanity and especially of women, and having many years ago agreed to will my brain to Cornell University (at their request), hereby confirm that bequest, provided a depleting illness or some special brain disturbance shall not have produced such brain disintegration as to render it no longer ‘representative of the brains of women who have used their brains for the public welfare,’ as was stated in the request of Cornell as the reason for wanting it, so as to add to the knowledge of the brain quality and characteristics of the ‘women who think’ as against the present statistics on women's brains which are based upon hospital ‘pickups’ and the less fortunate women of the world upon whose brains science has so far based its deductions and conclusions, and ‘which it has tabulated and set over against the results obtained from the examinations of the best male brains.
known to the world.’ If my brain can be useful to women after I am gone it is at their service through Cornell.”

She named a surgeon to arrange for the removal of the brain and to decide upon its disposition. Her instructions were followed and the brain sent to Cornell University from Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, D.C.

The interment took place at Arlington National Cemetery at half-past eleven o'clock in the morning of July 31, without ceremony. A number of her friends gathered at the grave, including many of her fellow workers in the office of the Civil Service Commission, to pay a last homage to a beloved Commissioner and friend.

Many beautiful floral tributes covered the grave and surrounding grass plot.

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FROM THE PRESS

Few writers handle in a lifetime so many grave topics as Helen Gardener has already taken up in her comparatively brief career. No writer has ever been more thorough and more clear than she has been in every subject she has studied.—Charles Grant Miller, in Cleveland Plain Dealer, December 9, 1894.

A large part of the wholesome agitation which has recently taken place for the promotion of a higher morality and in particular for the preservation of the young girls of the poor, has sprung from the fearless and powerful assaults made by Helen Gardener. On this subject she writes as one inspired. —A writer in The Arena, June, 1895.

Her work heretofore has been on lines of literary effort and latterly in the promotion of the suffrage cause, in which she has labored indefatigably and effectively. It has been in this latter connection that she has demonstrated administrative efficiency, and her selection for the post for which she is now named (member of the United States Civil Service Commission) is justified by her achievements in the executive department of the National Woman Suffrage Association.—Washington Star, March 23, 1920.

Mrs. Gardener is talented, has been active in the suffrage effort for years, and is now a leader in the movement for the organization and political education of women through the National League of
Women Voters, and these activities constitute a presumption of fitness for the office.—Philadelphia Bulletin, March 25, 1920.

The action of President Wilson in appointing Mrs. Helen Hamilton Gardener a civil service commissioner is a proper recognition of woman's new status in our national life. The lady named is admittedly a woman of great capacity and fine character.—For Wayne (Ind.) Gazette, March 26, 1920.

Three months ago President Wilson appointed Mrs. Gardener to this office, and she has brought to bear upon the 30 duties of the position the mature judgment of years in which she has studied the merit system, while not being actually engaged in it. But her work for suffrage and as an author, teacher, lecturer, and student of social science in its largest aspects, has given her an unusual range of opportunity and wide outlook of Government affairs.—Boston Transcript, June 28, 1920.

She makes it plain, however, that she is not civil service commissioner for the women only, but for all employees of Uncle Sam's civil establishment.—William D. Hassett in New York Evening Telegram, December 27, 1921.

In the death of Mrs. Helen H. Gardener, United States Civil Service Commissioner, the Federal service loses a valuable official. Mrs. Gardener's appointment was one of the first to place a woman in office and was the cause at the time of much skeptical comment. She fully justified her selection, however, displaying a rare degree of executive ability and of judgment in difficult situations. Mrs. Gardener's official position has in late years somewhat distracted attention from her writings. She was a gifted author and made numerous valuable contribution to American literature. Her personal graces endeared her to all with whom she was associated and who had the pleasure of her friendship and acquaintance.—Washington Star, July 27, 1925.

Through the death of Mrs. Helen H. Gardener, the Federal Government lost an official extraordinary because so notably qualified for the office which she administered. Mrs. Gardener brought to the civil service a wide knowledge of human nature, of the influences which contribute to character, of prime importance to an office the administration of which requires in such large measure consideration of quality of character.—Wyoming State Tribune-Leader (Cheyenne), July 31, 1925.

Mrs. Gardener was a woman of extraordinary ability who had done much to advance the recognition of women in occupations requiring extraordinary mental capacity.—Washington Post, August 5, 1925.

Helen Hamilton Gardener * * * was a Joan of Arc in the crusade for woman suffrage. She kept the light and was obedient to her Voices. In the years immediately preceding 31 the ratification of
the nineteenth amendment, Mrs Gardener was the liaison officer between the Woman Suffrage Committee and the Wilson administration. Mr. Wilson was not an early suffragist, but most of his cabinet favored it in 1914.

Mrs. Gardener knew the opinion of every one of the President's associates. She tried to convert him, not by militancy, for the scotch-Irish in him would have been driven off by such tactics. I do not know how it was that gradually Mr. Wilson came out as the first man in the White House to champion full suffrage for women, but Mrs. Catt and Mrs. Gardener had large part in “bringing him through,” assisted by some of us who sat in his Cabinet. * * * *

Mrs. Gardener was to prove her theory that woman was equal to man in public administration. I was with her the day President Wilson named her as a member of the United States Civil Service Commission. * * * *

Her record as civil service commissioner under difficult circumstances justified President Wilson's action in making the appointment. When she died her colleagues and the public paid tribute to her wisdom, her poise, her capacity, her usefulness. She died in the knowledge that she had “made good.”—Josephus Daniels, in Washington Herald, August 16, 1925.

“To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.”