

PROFESSIONAL WOMEN TELL OF HANDICAPS

Each Having Attained Success in Her Career, Lawyer, Actress, Physician, Writer and Teacher Tell of the Bars Which Were Placed in Their Path Solely Because They Were Women.



Inez Miholland Boissevain
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that, with the exception of the New York Infirmary for Women and Children, there was none that would admit me. And at the New York Infirmary the training, though admirable, was not general, but chiefly gynecological, which was not what I wanted just then.

"So I began a canvass of all the hospitals of New York City. I was armed with letters and introductions, for a great many people were deeply interested in the success of my experiment. Chief among them was Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi, one of the founders of the New York Infirmary and a pioneer physician and suffragist.

ous things of life in an expert, careful and keen-sighted way. "But when the man stops to think, and the woman, too, she will say: 'Oh, this man has had more practice in law or in medicine, therefore he will be likely to have more skill than the woman who has less frequent cases.'



Edith Ellis Furness



Nixola Greeley Smith



Dr. Emily Dunning Barringer

THE Handicaps Now Placed on Professional Women" was the topic that inspired various members of the Feminist Alliance to reveal the struggles they had undergone to achieve success in an outer world that was, until recently, man's own. Lawyer, actress, physician, writer, teacher, one after the other, they told of the handicaps they had been forced to fight against in their professions—just because they were women.

It was at the home of Mrs. Joseph Wise, 35 West 74th Street, that this professional women's meeting was held last Thursday evening. All of the feminists whose names stand for something were there. Inez Miholland presented the woman lawyer's side of the question; Edith Ellis Furness told of the struggles of the actress and the woman playwright in a man-made world; Emily Barringer revealed the handicaps of the woman physician; Nixola Greeley-Smith, of the woman journalist, and Henrietta Rodman told of the handicaps placed on the teacher.

The meeting was held under the auspices of the Feminist Alliance and a Committee on Married Women Teachers, consisting of Mrs. Marion B. Cotler, Mrs. Rheta Childs Dorr, Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Mrs. Marie Jenney Howe, Mrs. Alice Duer Miller, Mrs. Nina Wilcox Putnam, Mrs. Uden Mills Reid and Mrs. Norman de R. Whitehouse. The feminists listened proudly to the protests, for, after all, each of the speakers, as well as many in the audience, had made good in her profession in spite of the "handicap of being a woman."

Miss Nixola Greeley-Smith, who presented the case of woman in journalism, is employed by a newspaper syndicate to spread the cult of feminism, and she receives a distinctive salary for doing this agreeable work. It is, therefore, interesting to know where in lie the faults of a system which seemingly favors her, and Miss Greeley-Smith showed the Feminist Alliance how insidiously the world of man has choked the blossom of journalism for women.

Women Journalists Write as Men Dictate.
"The field of journalism is more open to women than are many of the other fields," she declared. "But they have never gone very far in it. They may do work which men deem suitable for women, and no other. They may write about cooking; they may write about dress. And they may write on one other subject—sex. They may have interviews with well known people. But they must discuss sex. And they must see sex as man sees it, not as they really find it. And they may talk about it in the way in which man has prescribed for them. They talk about their 'erring sister' and what she wants. They never talk about what they want. Ellen Key said that there are women who want motherhood regardless of marriage ceremonies. She did not say: 'I want to be absolved of pasts, just as my husband is.'

"Of course, when I believe in one standard of morality, I do not mean a low one. I mean one better standard. There are, however, women who do believe that certain rights are denied them. They want pasts. But they do not say so. They speak of other women who want them. To most women the prohibition of ages has finally become inhibition. To others it has become unjust discrimination."

No Women Executive Journalists.
There are no city editors, there are no managing editors and there are no editorial writers among women. "Why?" said Miss Greeley-Smith. "Why, because they are women. That is all. Women who write must write about love, and pour out sweet sugary stuff. That is the only sort that man likes to receive from them. You know man is of the sentimental sex. The best sub-sister is always the man. The woman sees the facts and the real truth of the matter. The man

FEMINISTS WHO TELL OF THEIR UPHILL STRUGGLE TO SUCCESS.

rides out joyfully on his sentiments. A few of them have broken loose, and write articles which are editorials in all but the form in which they are presented, but they must be signed by the woman's name in order to show the world that they are her opinions being expressed, not those of the paper. For who would care to be represented by a woman?
"But there is a more fundamental reason than that," she said. "Most women are not fit to be anything else. Men say women are not as creative, artistically, as men. My surprise is that they have done as much as they have. You know you can't set a person to reading hymns and only hymns all his life, and then ask him to lead a political campaign. Likewise, if a woman is only to be interested in what woman wears, and what she cooks, and in the differences of the sexes, she cannot be expected to have opinions on big general questions of the day." It would be senseless to chain an animal and then chide it for not running loose.
Playing Man's Game.
That women lack originality she forcibly denied. "Men have invented their game. We must not only play this game, which they like, but we must play it according to their own rules. We have nothing whatever to say about it. They tell us to do this and that, and we obey. We know that what they want is the only thing they will sanction. Originality means oblivion. It is the quickest route to the wastebasket. They would not like our individuality a bit at first. We should be too apt to call a spade a spade."
"Art requires quiet, it requires concentration and it requires serious study. That very unfair and unnecessary handicap, the choice between Love and Career is not only harmful at the time of choice. It shadows the girl's entire life. She works with the spirit of a dilettante because she knows that one day she will have to make her choice. "Naturally, she chooses Love, and therefore she does not fit herself to be anything but a woman. This 'business of being a woman' is far too great an evil. Woman should have a business and be a woman. There are some men who see the woman's point of view, and see that she, too, has her right. They are sufficiently broadminded not to stand in the way. I have great hopes for men. I am sure they will soon change."

Passed Examination with High Rating.
"This was terribly disheartening after all my work. Nevertheless, though this decision was irrevocable, I decided to take the examination just the same, for I felt that merely to have a woman take it would establish a valuable precedent and be at least a beginning in bringing the matter before the public. This permission was not revoked, but I was told that my rating would not be published as the others were. I afterward learned that I had stood high enough to obtain a position had I been a man.
"I kept on with my search for hospital facilities, and soon after, in company with another woman, was admitted to the competitive examination for Gouverneur Hospital. We both won positions. But the question was how to get what we had won. As this was a public hospital our titles had to be ratified by the Commissioner of Public Charities, then Commissioner Keller. We went to see him, but he refused to ratify the results of the examination. He said he couldn't take the responsibility of admitting women to a public hospital, with an extremely heavy and arduous service, when the private hospitals uptown, with their far lighter service, were unwilling to take the risk. Bitter as was my disappointment, I could understand his position, and felt that I could hardly blame him for fearing to initiate so important a step.
"This seemed to put an end to my plans for the time, and though pressure was still being applied to the hospitals through various personal and official channels there seemed no immediate prospect of success. I had spent a whole year in the vain effort to get in, and had lost the chance of entering the New York Infirmary, which I could have had in the beginning, so I now became Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi's private assistant. But within a year of my first attempt to enter Gouverneur Hospital it happened that politics took a hand in my destiny. The administration changed, and the president of a new board of trustees, Dr. John Winters Brannan, came into office. Dr. Brannan announced that if any women obtained positions at Gouverneur Hospital he would ratify them. When this news reached us Dr. Jacobi insisted

various hospitals I had met again and again the same stock objections to my plea. They were as follows:
1. There was no precedent.
2. There were no adequate quarters for women physicians.
3. There would be trouble with the nursing staff.
4. There would be trouble with the woman superintendent.
5. Women were not strong enough physically.
6. Ambulance work was too heavy for them.
7. They had not nerve enough to be house surgeons or to handle alarming hemorrhages.
8. There would be trouble with the men patients.
9. There would be trouble with discipline.
10. It was not woman's work.
11. There would be trouble with the house staff.
12. There would be trouble with the medical board.
"Of course, at that time I could not make any effective answer to these objections. They were all in the nature of prophecy, and I had no way of knowing whether they were valid or not. But I wanted a chance to find out. I had to admit that there was no precedent, but then that was just the situation I wanted to remedy. As to the wearing nature of ambulance work, I have found that it requires not so much brute force as endurance, the power to get along without much sleep and keep the nerves steady. These are qualities quite commonly admitted to be feminine.
"Then, as to the nerve necessary to meet a sudden emergency, I believe this to be an individual qualification regardless of sex. Some physicians have a purely medical bent, others are naturally surgical. I have found this to be true of both men and women, though I can't say what the proportion is. The many kinds of trouble prophesied proved to be illusions—all except one. I had no difficulty with nurses or patients or any subordinates, but it was from the house staff, from my colleagues and peers, those who had had the same training as I had and were supposed to have the same aims and ideals, that came the only grave unpleasantness I had."

"Woman's Fault, Too," Said Inez Miholland Boissevain.
Mrs. Inez Miholland Boissevain told her feminist audience that it isn't man's fault that women are handicapped in the various professions any more than it is woman's fault. "It's just people's fault," she said. A cheering thought this from a woman who has worked among men in a profession that has been exclusively man's ever since governments acquired majesty and dignity and called it law.
"The bias which people, men and women, have toward men, when seeking expertness, is unconscious. And it is quite natural. When a man wants a lawyer he thinks without volition of a man. If a woman wants a good doctor she thinks directly of a man. I would, even though I think that women doctors are better, when I stop to reason. But quite instinctively I will turn to the man. That is because ages of habit have made us all feel that the man is quite accustomed to do the seri-

ous things of life in an expert, careful and keen-sighted way. "But when the man stops to think, and the woman, too, she will say: 'Oh, this man has had more practice in law or in medicine, therefore he will be likely to have more skill than the woman who has less frequent cases.'

That is the way they will excuse themselves."
By far the largest class, Mrs. Boissevain pointed out, is that of the person who frankly or otherwise disbelieves in a woman's ability solely because she is a woman. "I find that in law, just as other women in other professions do. In Oxford, when examinations were rated according to sex, it was found that women always received very much lower marks. In art exhibitions women's paintings were ranked lower. Until papers and works of art were sent in anonymously results were far different.

No Bias at the Bar.
"But when we try a case there is no prejudice against us. Other lawyers, the judges and the jury are all willing to make allowances and to help us. At least that has been my experience. But that we must work against as strenuously as against anything else. There must be no sex discrimination. What we must do is to agitate and to talk

the Bar Association, which is a great handicap, because that excludes us from its library, and, besides, is irksome. We are seldom made investigators, not only because that is political, but because the idea of giving a woman anything so important to do is bewildering.

There is only one college in New York which admits women to its courses. Women are not admitted to

and, more than all, to prove our worth. We must show them that we are serious, that we can do the things men do and that they, the laymen, may rely on us quite as completely as they do on men."

Miss Henrietta Rodman, in speaking of the Feminist Alliance, declared that its aims were world old. Recently women demanded two things, equal rights to receive education and equal political rights. Now they want to have the Constitution of the United States amended to make it illegal to discriminate against any person on account of sex. "A measure such as this would revolutionize America and the rest of the world by suggestion. We have nearly gained the equal political rights and nearly gained the educational rights. But not entirely. Now we must have the right to do whatever is to be done and not to be handicapped by our sex."

She spoke of the teacher-mother fight, which gave working women the right to motherhood, and of the privilege which married women have to continue teaching. "But we are still handicapped. We may not be permitted after we become married, unless our husbands are feeble-minded or totally unable to support us.

"And we still have the greatest handicap of all. Children. And the other primitive labors. Taking care of chil-

drren is such a tremendous responsibility that women cannot do that and have their career at the same time. Which is not only indicative of great inefficiency, but is also manifestly unfair. Just make men give up their careers because they have to take care of their children and their soup and they will immediately see our point. "What the Feminist Alliance is laboring for is to make it possible for women to have their children and home and their career at the same time. We must relieve the working mother of the care of child and household. Co-operative nurses and kindergartens. Co-operative apartments will remove all difficulties.
"Not every woman can make a good mother. In that case it is better for her and for the child, who will receive trained and more of the individual attention necessary to it if it is in charge of a capable woman. Apartments will merely have to go one step further. They give us vacuum cleaners, light and heat, and it will be an easy matter for them to give us our meals, a roof garden, a Montessori school and all the other household service. Then the millstone will be removed from the woman's neck, and she can be a serious worker, with years of labor before her, in place of being confronted with marriage and final cessation of all the work which she does best."

ARE WOMEN PEOPLE? By ALICE DUER MILLER

YOU NEVER KNOW YOUR LUCK.
A bylaw of the New York Board of Education says:
"No married woman shall be appointed to any teaching or supervising position in the New York public schools unless her husband is mentally or physically incapacitated to earn a living, or has deserted her for a period of not less than one year. Satisfactory proof of such incapacity or desertion must be presented to the Board of Education."

Ideal Candidates.
Board. Characters. Three Would-Be Teachers.
Chorus by Board:
Now please don't waste
Your time and ours
By pleas all based
On mental powers.
She seems to us
The proper stuff
Who has a husband
Band had enough.
All other pleas appear to us
Excessively superfluous.

1st Teacher: My husband is not really bad—
Board: How very sad, how very sad!
1st Teacher: He's good, but hear my one excuse—
Board: Oh, what's the use; oh, what's the use?
1st Teacher: Last winter in a railroad wreck
He lost an arm and broke his neck.
He's doomed, but lingers day by day.
Board: Her husband's doomed! Hurray, hurray!

2nd Teacher: My husband's kind, and healthy, too.
Board: Why, then, of course, you will not do.
2nd Teacher: Just hear me out. You'll find you're wrong.
It's true his body's good and strong;
But, ah, his wits are all astray.
Board: Her husband's mad! Hip, hip, hurray!

3rd Teacher: My husband's wise and well—the creature!
Board: Then you can never be a teacher.
3rd Teacher: Wait. For I led him such a life.
He could not stand me as a wife:
Last Michaelmas he ran away.
Board:

Her husband hates her. Hip, hurray!
Chorus by Board:
Now we have found
Without a doubt,
By process sound
And well thought out,
Each candidate
Is fit in truth
To educate
The mind of youth.
No teacher need apply to us
Whose married life's harmonious. (Curtain.)

ASK YOUR FATHER.
The New York Board of Education gives as the first cause for which leave of absence may be granted: Serious personal illness of the teacher. We have not yet discovered whether the illness incident to bearing a child is not serious, or not personal.

OUR OWN ANTI-SUFFRAGE COLUMN.
(Drawn from letters to "The New York Times" of February 14, 1915.)
TOO CLOSELY, SOME THINK.
Party politics deal with the business aspects of government. It is man's business, and is closely related to his personal business.—Mrs. Arthur M. Dodge.

NOTHING TO WIVES AND MOTHERS.
With battles to be fought by men, and men's lives to be sacrificed, it would seem only fair that men alone should determine a nation's policy.—J. Howard Cowperthwaite.

SOME OLD-FASHIONED COMPLIMENTS.
Rebellious women think they can grow to do all things as well as men. . . . They excel in two things—nursing and singing soprano.—E. G. K.
Men are practical and just, and women are temperamentally impressionable, erratic and very theoretical.—W. F. Quinn, Alderman, 15th District.

A few descriptive terms selected at random: Restless, dissatisfied, wild, shrieking, blatant, loud-voiced, female demagogues and chronic limelight hunters.

VERY FITTING.
One grandmother in St. Louis is reported to have been influenced by "The Times" anti-suffrage editorial.
THE E DANGER.
I pity those with all my heart
Who think they play, through good and ill,
A wise, a safe, a prudent part
By standing absolutely still.
They think they're cautious, sure and strong,
But sometimes living people say:
"This rock has blocked the stream too long,
It's time to blast it all away."