

# The Woman's Chamber of Commerce—National and International

By ELENE FOSTER



States Chamber of Commerce has not only been very considerate of its little sister, but has stretched forth a helping hand to steady her until she could walk alone. And now that she can trot off very briskly quite on her own account, except when the road is exceptionally rough, she is able in return to be of some slight assistance to the big brother in matters that lie within the sphere of her feminine experience.

The Woman's Chamber of Commerce looms on the horizon as just about the biggest "woman's" project since the suffrage campaign was brought to a successful finish. There have been all sorts of women's trade organizations and business women's clubs, but never since the world began has there been a woman's chamber of commerce. Do not confuse it with any other organization or any other woman's club, for it is not a woman's club any more than the United States Chamber of Commerce could be called a "man's club."

The Woman's Chamber of Commerce is an organization of business and professional women banded together for the promotion of every branch of American industry and commerce. It is both national and international; one of the first branches to be established outside our own country was organized a short time ago in China. It works in exactly the same way as the United States Chamber of Commerce, its function is the same and its members pay the same dues as are paid by the men. Its treasurer and all others handling money are bonded.

It is not affiliated with any other organization nor can any organization (as such) join its membership. It is composed of efficient, earnest women who are earning their own living in a business or profession.

The founder and president of the organization is Mrs. Katherine Clemmons Gould, and to her belongs all the credit, not only for the idea itself, but for the comprehensive plans for carrying it out as well.

The Woman's Chamber of Commerce was incorporated last January and its growth during the six months of its existence has been extraordinary, particularly when

one takes into consideration the fact that up to this time it has done no advertising and been given no publicity. Mrs. Gould's idea was to wait until it should have established

directors of the various trade associations it has sent its representatives to speak at their conventions. For example, Mrs. Gould attended the convention of the Manufactur-

ers. Through the courtesy of the knit goods manufacturers the Woman's Chamber of Commerce occupied a booth at the exposition which was held in connection with the convention, this being its first public appearance at such an exhibition.

There is no limit to the scope of the work which the Woman's Chamber of Commerce is planning to do. It seems a far cry, does it not, from the designing of educational toys to replace those which formerly came to us from Germany to the opening up of the Mississippi waterways to

first thought must be the betterment of her own country, and she must be interested before all else in the increasing of our trade and industry both at home and abroad.

The officers of the organization, besides Mrs. Gould, the president-at-large, are Nanette B. Paul, of Paul Institute, elected president; Mrs. William Severin, vice-president-at-large; Mrs. Ida Clyde Clark, vice-president; Ethel McQuiston, assistant secretary; Edith Wallace Pichon, auditor; Lillian Cole-Bethel, parliamentarian, and Elizabeth Murray Shepherd, historian. There

are no salaries paid to any officer of the organization.

Branches of the Woman's Chamber of Commerce are being opened in all our cities, and in some cases the members are already raising funds to erect permanent buildings of their own. Curiously enough, the South is particularly enterprising in establishing these branches. I met a charming little Southern woman in Mrs. Gould's office the other morning, as pretty and dainty and feminine as she could be, who had come from Louisiana to consult with Mrs. Gould about erecting a Woman's Chamber of Commerce building there.

"My husband is so interested," she remarked, and I suppose I showed my surprise at this, for she added, "Oh, you wouldn't know the South in these days. Our men want their women to be just as progressive as you Northerners are. The old prejudice against women knowing anything or doing anything outside of their own homes has quite disappeared. It's a new South, she 'nough."

The Woman's Chamber of Commerce is wise in this respect: it does not profess to "know it all." It realizes that although it may have just as clever intellects among its members as there are among those of the men's organization it lacks the experience which is necessary to take the initiative in any big movement, and it wisely accepts this and applies itself to gaining by every means in its power the wisdom and experience which it lacks. For this purpose it will establish classes in the early fall for the instruction of its members who are anxious for more light on any subject pertaining to their business or profession. It already sees a great future in our trade with South America, and there will consequently be classes to fit women to carry on the various lines of business with our Southern neighbors.

While the Woman's Chamber of Commerce is by no manner of means an "uplift" society, it is naturally interested in any sort of welfare work which will help workingwomen of all classes, and so with its other activities it carries a "side line," as it were, of ideas for improving the condition of women and children. It is particularly interested just now in the matter of adequate housing,

and it purposes to use women architects and builders and landscape gardeners to work out its plans.

The betterment of the condition of women and children in industrial plants will be another matter to which it will give its earnest consideration. It already has a department of patrols and a vigilance committee studying the question as to how it may be of use in making the camping grounds of our national parks safe for the women and children while their men have gone on long hunting and fishing excursions, for it appears there is a real peril here.

But among its many activities I think I am safe in saying that the pet project of the Woman's Chamber of Commerce at the present time is the opening up of the Mississippi Valley and the building of ships for our merchant marine. They want to see our own ships (insured by our own ship insurance, by the by) bring to us the goods direct from foreign ports which are now sent not only by foreign ships but by way of foreign countries, mainly France and England, thus making a tremendous increase in the selling price because of the duties of the other countries, the extra freightage and all the needless overhead expenses.

They want to see tourists coming here in our own ships from all over the world, bringing their motor cars in which to tour our country, just as we used to tour Europe in ours before the war. There is no end to the visions which these women have of the America of the future—safe, plausible visions, the visions of women of common sense and stick-to-it-iveness, who are banded together by the watchword, "Each is bound to all."

## WOMAN'S HOUR

By Permission

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN  
Not for herself! Though sweet the air of freedom;  
Not for herself! Though dear the new-born power;  
But for the child who needs a noble Mother.  
For the whole people needing One Another.  
Comes Woman to her Hour.



Leola King

In charge of Woman's Patrol and Vigilant Committee of the Woman's Chamber of Commerce



Katherine Clemmons Gould

Founder and President-at-Large of the Woman's Chamber of Commerce

branches in the large cities and be in good working order before telling of its existence. It seems that the time has now come when it can no longer hide its light under a bushel. Its membership is increasing daily, and branches have been established in nearly all of the big commercial centres of the country. It is a member of the United States Chamber of Commerce and of the Merchants' Association of New York, and at the invitation of the

Knitted Goods, which was held recently in Philadelphia, and delivered an address on the subject of underwear and hosiery, which was quoted in the newspapers all over the country and opened the eyes of the manufacturers to the fact that women are demanding different styles and cuts in both these necessary articles, and because they cannot find what they want in the domestic goods they are buying those of foreign manufact-

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# The Woman's Hour Has Not Yet Struck Among the Bedouins

FOLLOWERS of fashion, give heed! There is a people still dwelling on the face of this earth whose women folk have not changed the style of their dress for centuries!

O ruffianettes, give ear! There is a people in this world whose women folk are considered "less than the dust," whose hands perform the hard labors of life and who have never even dreamed of rebelling against their fate!

This people dwells "Across the sands of Syria, Or possibly Algeria, Or some benighted neighborhood of dreariness and drought."

To be more exact, they are the

Bedouins of that portion of the Sahara which makes a barbaric fringe upon the edge of civilization in North Africa.

## "Let the Women Do the Work" Is No Joke Here

A romantic enough figure is the little "flower of the desert" in her blue robe, with her pretty bare arms and beautiful face. She is probably not more than twelve years old, but the roses of the desert blossom early, and she is the favorite wife of a Bedouin many years her senior.

As long as she retains her youthful charm she is passionately and jealously regarded by her lord and master. She is sheltered from the eyes of other men, but not from toil

and weariness. The Bedouin woman is never set upon a pedestal by her lord, nor even allowed to walk beside him on an equal footing, for that would be contrary to the teachings and commands of Mahomet, who maintained that woman was an inferior creature.

When the tall, sturdy Bedouin, wrapped in his white burnous mounts his horse or his camel and sets forth into the sandy wastes of the desert, his little wife trudges beside him, barefoot, through the sand. He may stoop to caress and pat his horse during the journey, but would

lords of creation have eaten their fill.

These Bedouin tribes of North Africa are perhaps as impervious to the influence of modern civilization as any people in the world. The great wars and battles between the Europeans and the natives of Africa have taken place on the frontiers of their desert. But they have always been able to retire into that sea of sand, whither unaccustomed feet could not follow them, and to return later, on as strong as ever. Since the French took control of North Africa these wild tribes have been,

ment which the Bedouin woman wears, complicated though its many loops and folds may appear to the inexperienced eye. A single piece of coarse woollen cloth, about twice as large as an ordinary counterpane, is wound around the body and fastened with a primitive sort of safety-pin in so clever a manner that it looks like a European skirt. The cloth is bound around the waist with a cord and loosened above, to form a sort of pocket, in which the lady carries provisions and other necessities. Neck, arms and legs go bare, but her head, with its closely braided jet black hair, is decently covered with a striped silk handkerchief of some gay, light color.

coarse linen shirt, wide trousers reaching to the knees and a waistcoat, sometimes embroidered in gay colors and decked with silver buttons. Over all this is thrown the inevitable white burnous, while the head is covered with a small fez and then wound in a white turban. Some wealthy Bedouins even wear short stockings and light slippers of leather or felt, exchanged during a journey for top boots of red or yellow leather. They move all the time and the women do the moving.

When a girl is to be married her father sells her to a suitor of his own choosing. This generally happens when she is from thirteen to fifteen years of age. By the time she is twenty her beauty has faded; her husband beats her, gives her little food, and compels her to act as servant to the new young wife he has bought. She has never even heard of a woman having any other kind of existence, and the one feeling that dominates her is abject fear of and utter dependence upon her lord and master.

Her life is as ever changing and yet as monotonous as the eternal, shifting sands of the desert. The Bedouins are generally shepherds, but those of the northern Sahara cultivate small tracts of land. As the soil cannot be cultivated in one spot for long, because of the dearth of water, the family and the tribe are continually moving from place to place. Only three months elapse between the sowing and the ripening of the corn; harvests are over in April or May, and then the Bedouins move on to cultivate another piece of virgin soil. The hard labor of moving is done by the women.

## Bedouins Back From World War Want Modern Wives

Just beyond the border of the Bedouins' domain, in that part of

the influence of Mahometanism and have had a taste of the life of western peoples. They have come home hungry for something of the sort in their own land. To them woman has taken on a new charm, a new dignity and worth. These young men want women for their companions, not for their slaves, and so they are seeking educated, modern wives.

These are few at present, but

## The Italian Jane Addams On the Tasks of Feminism

Courtesy Marie Loschi of Rome interviews Dr. Anita Dobelli Zampetti.

OUT of town, in a small villa, among trees and flowers, where babies can play and live healthily and happily, where noise and smoke are almost unknown, there lives Dr. Anita Dobelli Zampetti, one of our greatest pacifists, a sort of Italian Jane Addams, at Berne.

Mrs. Dobelli is not very tall nor very thin, her hair is curly and almost gray, her skin smooth, her look and smile very lively and clever. She teaches Italian in a normal school of Rome and belongs to the most advanced Socialist party.

She knows that I belong to the opposition, but hearing that I go to interview her for my American readers she receives me most kindly and adds: "You know, women of good heart and fine judgment always find certain points where they can meet."

My first question was about the Women's International Conference at Berne.

"I hope that this Women's International Conference for permanent peace will show the world the serious, useful activity of women in every country," said Dr. Zampetti.

"The Italian section of the Women's International Conference was organized by Mrs. Genoni, in Milan, in July, 1915, but she put in circulation, before having the official permit, petitions for peace to be signed. So her house was searched

and the activity of the Sezione Milanese was stopped. "The Roman section, called Sezione Italiana del Comitato Internazionale Femminile per una Pace Permanente" (Piazza Campo Marzio 7, Rome), was born on March 2, 1919. Turin, Naples and Bologna are preparing their own sections." The programme of this group includes:

- (1) Equal civil and political rights for men and women.
- (2) Principles and means apt to resolve all international conflicts in a pacific way.

"The real task of feminism is the strong will to conquer the means of avoiding future wars. Without the vote there is no chance to get necessary reforms, therefore the 'Internazionale Femminile' stands for the political vote.

"Our main work is based on educational reforms. We want a free school, free from the state, free from all chains, helping the development of the personality. We must change the education system—yes, it must be a national one, but brought toward a feeling of internationalism, and all teachers ought to be interested in this movement.

"We must wake up women and recall them to their responsibility toward all modern social problems. We have just come out of a period of violence, of horrible fight; we have been taught and we have thought that violence was a right and a duty, that we could reach an ideal of justice only through violence. Now only women can make people throw away their weapons, only women can and must discuss certain problems, and can teach that we have to get justice without violence."

## The Machinery of Ratifying The Suffrage Amendment

AS EACH state Legislature ratifies the woman suffrage amendment formal papers conveying the ratification action are put away in the archives of the State Department in Washington.

The process of putting woman suffrage formally into the Constitution of the United States is simple, so far as the mechanical side is concerned. The matter of amending the Constitution lies strictly with the Congress and the state legislatures. The President has no contact with the measure. The Secretary of State or the acting secretary will be the last agent to handle the amendment before all the women in this country are enfranchised.

This is the way it is done:

Shortly after Congress passed the suffrage resolution the State Department ordered a form letter made up to be sent to the Governors of all the states. This letter transmitted a certified copy of the suffrage resolution, and requested that the Governor bring it to the attention of the Legislature. For the suffrage amendment these letters were sent out June 12.

On the inner sheet of the letter was a postscript. It reproduced

Section 205 referred to in the letter:

"Whenever official notice is received at the Department of State that any amendment proposed by the Constitution of the United States has been adopted, according to the provisions of the Constitution, the Secretary of State shall forthwith cause the amendment to be published in the newspapers authorized to promulgate the laws, with his certificate, specifying the states by which the same may have been adopted and that the same has become valid, to all intents and purposes, as a part of the Constitution of the United States.—Revised Statutes, 1878."

Each ratification certificate as it is received in Washington is placed in a large manila envelope and filed to await the arrival of certificates from the necessary number of other states. A letter of acknowledgment is then sent to the state.

When the thirty-six certificates have been received the Secretary of State makes a public proclamation of the women's right to vote. Then the ratification papers are mounted on the heaviest of white paper folders and placed alphabetically in a large square case especially made for them. So incased they then go to the wooden cabinet where are kept all the papers connected with the Constitution of the United States.

never dream of offering an arm to his helpmate. All the "helping" is her part of the bargain.

When night comes on and the company decides to camp, it is the women who pitch the tents of black camel's hair, which they have made with their own hands; the women who unsaddle the horses and camels; the women who milk the sheep and cook the supper; the women who humbly serve the men their evening meal, of which they themselves are not allowed to partake until the

supposedly, under military discipline and guardianship, but they have maintained their own tribal organizations and almost complete independence, so far as their actual lives are concerned.

## The Men Lead Even In Fashions

They follow the traditions of Islam, and their dwellings, their furnishings (which are few and far between) and their clothing date back to the days of the Bible. Simplicity is really the keynote of the one gar-



The Bedouin and his chattel wife never dreamed of "lady caps."

Courtesy of Centenary Commission, Methodist Episcopal Church



Trinkets, of course, are indispensable, and generally consist of silver earrings, bracelets and rings. As a rule the woman's adornment is completed by the tattooing of a little square on each cheek and a cross between the eyebrows.

The costume of the Bedouin man is more elaborate, consisting of a North Africa which has long been under the influence of European civilization, a change is taking place in the lives of Moslem women. It is being brought about by the men, those young Arabs and Berbers who went to France to fight in the great war. Their horizon has been broadened. They have been freed from