

"BROWNSTONE FRONTS" Hide Domestic Tragedies Which Put "Social Butterflies" to Test



Lady
Newborough
Main Photo



Mrs. William
G. Choate



Mrs. John
Seely Ward



Mrs. Carl
De Gersdoff

Once Wealthy Women Who Meet Adversity Through Death and Turn of Fortune Prove Stamina and Work Out Own Salvation—How They Do It.

BY ELIAS TOBINSON.

NEW YORK, Feb. 12.—(Special).—Brownstone fronts tell no tales. It is a pity they don't. If they did they would bring to light stories of that misery "sacred even to gods," stories of heroism, of character and fortitude that would be at least credit to American womanhood. For it is behind brownstone fronts in fashionable sections of New York that the battle with misfortune is often fought and won by women generally taken to be spineless, characterless—mere social butterflies.

Accident and death are no respecters of classes and social favorites. The same hand of fate which sends a structural ironworker headlong to his death from an 18-story steel skyscraper strikes the wheel of the young doctor's machine a trifle too much to one side and hurries the physician over an embankment or into a telephone pole to an untimely death. The young physician's wife, left without resources, with no trade in hand and with a child or two depending on her, has a battle with poverty to fight. While fighting this battle she often reaches a height of character that borders on the heroic.

There are thousands of such widows in New York—women of society—women graduates of colleges, of finishing schools, women of accomplishment and

talent—who at the age of 25 or 40 find themselves in a position where they must earn their own livelihood. They are worse off than the woman in the hotel or tenement-house who has been living in poverty since her birth. Their suffering is keener, made more poignant by the very contrast of the state from which they descended into poverty. They must fight want, too, in secret—must preserve appearances.

For the poor woman of the tenement there are scores of agencies she can go to, tell her troubles or apply for aid. For the woman who has been living all her life in comfortable surroundings behind brownstone walls there are only four exchanges in New York where she can turn for advice, training and actual assistance.

Help for Unfortunate Women.
The four exchanges that make a specialty of educating and helping gentlewomen in reduced circumstances "to become self-supporting" are the following:

The New York Exchange for Women's Work, No. 234 Madison avenue.
The Madison Avenue Exchange, No. 277 Madison avenue.
The West End Exchange, No. 167 West Seventy-fourth street.
The Needlework Department of the Young Women's Christian Association, No. 14 West Forty-fifth street.

The largest and by far most patronized of these exchanges is the New York Exchange for Women's Work, at No. 234 Madison avenue. Mrs. John Seely Ward is president of the exchange. Mrs. William G. Choate, honorary president and Mrs. Russell Sage is the honorary vice-president. Among the others actively associated in the work of the exchange are Mrs. Samuel H. Ordway and Mrs. Carl A. de Gersdoff. Miss E. H. Lansing is the superintendent. This is the mission of the exchange as outlined by Miss Lansing: "It seeks out 'the gentlewoman in reduced circumstances' and makes a careful study of her abilities as well as her needs. Where a distressed widow has any sort of skilled trade the Vocational Bureau of Skilled Workers, run in connection with the exchange, promptly tries to find employment for her outside of the home—if she is in a position to leave home. Such widows of middle age are frequently placed as hospital matrons and assistant matrons, institution superintendents and the like.

Where a woman has children to take care of something in which she is especially proficient, as a housekeeper, is discovered. The woman is set up in business cooking, or baking or sewing or embroidering. The exchange provides a salesroom for the product of her labor. Thus if you enter the exchange you will find piled high on counters knitted goods, dresses, all sorts of beautiful robes, bonnets, children's suits and the like. The articles, all hand-made, are sold to customers of discriminating taste, who are willing to pay more for the better workmanship of the articles. In the food division of the exchange are all sorts of preserves, hand-dipped cakes, canned fruits, homemade wine, bread, rolls, delicacies and even broths, which solve the problem of a pickup Sunday supper or a pickup supper on any night.

These articles of food are made by women who are expert in their line. Because they are of the best quality the sale for them is ready and the women who bake and cook and make

pastry in their own little kitchens in the brownstone homes are enabled to earn a livelihood, to send their children to school and defy poverty.

A tearoom run in connection with the New York Exchange for Women's Work is liberally patronized and many of the food products are used there. It is the boast of the exchange that it "has taught many women the dignity of work."

The New York Exchange for Women's Work alone supplies a market for the products of 1600 women. In the month of December of last year the sales of the exchange amounted to \$13,000.

"The problem of helping gentlewomen in reduced circumstances," said Mrs. John Seely Ward, president of the society, "is large and distressing. New York is a big city. The wheel of fortune is turning constantly. A slump in the stock market means the end of one man's wealth. Often it means the end of that man's existence. A bullet in the brain ends it as far as he is concerned.

"But there is his wife and often children. They have to live. And it is not easy for a woman to jump into a man's harness and become the breadwinner of the family, especially where she has had no trade.

"If I had my way I would make every girl, regardless of her station in society, regardless of the wealth which her parents may possess, learn a trade alongside of her general education. One never can tell when she might have to make use of it. As it is, when misfortune comes she is more at a disadvantage than the woman in the tenement, who is hardened to poverty and

has had to shift for herself all her life.

"The Exchange for Women's Work is the oldest institution of the kind in the world. It was opened in 1878. There have since been modeled after it some 80 exchanges throughout the country. The exchange has furnished information in regard to its methods, system and departments to exchanges in Canada, France, Germany and England."

How the exchange works can best be shown by citing a few cases of widows and what it has done for them.

A few years ago a promising chemist died after a brief illness. The man was 35 years old and at the threshold of his scientific career. The salary he was earning gave him and his family, consisting of a wife and two children, a comfortable home. He had not yet arrived at the point where he could do anything toward saving up for his future, but he had hopes—great hopes. Death ended all.

The immediate friends of the family were worried. One of them knew of the Exchange for Women's Work and the institution was quickly got in touch with. After several visits to the chemist's widow the investigator of the exchange became fairly intimate with the woman and was invited to her humble lunch. One of the dishes served was beef hash. The investigator found the dish delicious and

right there the widow's problem was solved. She was advised to go into the business of making beef hash. The exchange would market it for her. Today on one of the tables at the exchange building, No. 234 Madison avenue, the beef hash of this woman is one of the most popular products. The woman's monthly check from the exchange for the hash purchased from her averages about \$150.

The untimely death of a physician left his wife and two children helpless. The exchange got busy and studied the woman's case. She had never worked in her life. She married when she was only 18 and was practically a stranger to the world's battles and struggle for existence.

Big Money for Pies.
Three conversations with this woman disclosed that she was a good baker. She was especially good at baking mince pies. So she was told to bake mince pies. Her bill from the exchange for mince pies during the Christmas month was \$255. She supports herself and her children in comfort.

There is room in the exchange for the artistic attainments as much as for the useful and needful. A naval officer died recently in the prime of his career. He left a wife and three children without funds. Anxious friends called on the exchange for advice. A few conversations with the woman

revealed that she had a fine education, had traveled much, but there was nothing tangible that her education could be put to. Then accidentally the woman dropped a remark that she was intensely interested in the study of butterflies and that in her travels, which had been rather extensive, she had accumulated a large collection of butterflies. She was advised to work in these butterflies in coasters, vases and trays and other glass ornamental articles. She has been at work making these ornaments for some years now, as a ready sale for such articles has been found. She is earning her livelihood and is sending one boy to college.

There are various ways of trimming dolls. A woman who knows how to trim dolls artistically is earning her livelihood by doing just this work, according to Mrs. H. M. Richmond, superintendent of the Madison Avenue Exchange for Women's Work, No. 277 Madison avenue. So remarkable are the ways in which this woman can make a doll appealing that she receives as high as \$10 for some of the dolls she trims.

Chicken pies better than mother used to make give a comfortable livelihood to another woman whose product is on sale at the above mentioned exchange. Superintendent Richmond blamed the husbands for the helplessness of so many women from the wealthier homes at the first turn of the wheel.

"The husband today is too much inclined to keep his business affairs to himself," she said. "The wife knows little or nothing about her husband's financial standing. She goes on living according to the standard which she thinks her husband's income permits. Then there is some kind of a flurry in the stock market, the man loses everything he had and his wife is the sufferer. Had she been trained in time she might have been more economical. Too many men, however, think that their wives are incapable of understanding their business."

About 300 women earn their livelihood taking their products to the Madison Avenue Exchange. The West End Exchange, according to its superintendent, Mrs. S. J. Patton, has about 500 women working for it.

TALES OF THE SUPERNATURAL BY THOSE WHO SAW AND BELIEVED

HAVE you ever seen or known a ghost? If not, read the following contributions from those who have and get a few "creeps."

Spirit of a Former Fiancee.

THAT there is no loss of identity after passing over to the beyond, and that they still retain interest in us, has been proved to me positively, and has been a comfort to me, as I have lost many dear friends and relatives, but this one instance which I am about to relate has been my own experience in life of possible communication, although I have tried a number of times; never with any success.

I had been recently married, but a short time previous to my meeting my husband I had been engaged to a gentleman living in a distant city. My thoughts frequently turned to my former fiancee, and with the hope that the news of my marriage might cause him no regret. To my surprise and joy, one morning the post brought me wedding cards—his. I was simply delighted, as now I felt sure he was happy too. I wrote him a hearty congratulation, and there the matter ended, as we had no mutual friends.

Two or three months after that, one extremely sultry night, my husband came home completely exhausted from the city, and he proposed that we should retire to rest early. I went upstairs first. There was no light in the hall or rooms up there. I had given permission to our servants to go to the beach and we were absolutely alone in the house.

My husband remained down to fasten up the windows, and I had reached the top of the landing, where it was quite dark. Someone said, "Hello," to me quite close in a manly, ringing, hearty voice, as if close enough to touch me. At first I was indignant that a man should be in my house like that and upstairs. Then as I peered into the darkness I saw there was no one. I was frightened and turned to run back down the steps and met my husband coming up. He hunted all through the rooms for "the man," but by that time the realization came to me to whom that familiar voice belonged. That one word "Hello" was so fraught with his personality that in the whole vocabulary no other word

could have so positively identified him. I was trembling, pale and frightened, for I realized the voice and knew that nothing short of the supernatural could account for it, and I knew and said then, "Oh, he is dead, I am quite sure."

My husband still tried to laugh me out of the idea, but I passed a sleepless, restless night and early in the morning telephoned to the home he used to live in, in a distant city, and was told, "Why, yes; he is dead; died a month ago; was ill only a short time."

O. H. P.

An Unbeliever Convinced

IT was in Chicago in 1898 that I met a man whom we will call "Jim" Mulford—as fine a specimen of panache as I ever expect to meet.

We were mutually attracted to each other and in the course of the three years that we were pals only one thing marred our friendship. He was an ardent believer in ghosts, spirit manifestations, etc., while I had always been as ardent in my disbelief and opposed even to investigation of the subject. Consequently our arguments were vehement and at times threatened to disrupt our friendship.

"Jim," I said to him one day, after a heated argument, "I think too much of you to fight with you. I don't believe in ghosts. Let us call it quits on the spook talk and save our friendship."

"Agreed!" he shouted, "but you will believe some day. Mark my words! And if I die first I'll be the one to show you."

That was the last time we ever talked together on that subject.

sleeping heavily. About half-past 2 o'clock I awakened with a jump.

"Will you believe now?" I seemed to hear someone say.

"Will I believe what?" I mumbled, for I was gathering myself together; but there was no answer.

I sat up in bed, standing at the foot of my bed was "Jim" Mulford. "Jim," I said, startled, and reached over; but he retreated, and I could see him only indistinctly. "Jim" Mulford? I almost gasped, and sprang out of bed; but he was gone.

I turned on the light. I examined all doors, windows and closets. They were exactly as I had left them on retiring—the doors securely locked.

I returned to my bed, but not to sleep. That never before had the sun been so slow in getting up. I was convinced. Breakfast didn't appeal to me.

At 10 o'clock I left my office and took a car for "Jim's" hotel. He probably would be out attending to his business, but I just had to go. I talked a few minutes with the clerk and then I understood, for "Jim" Mulford had been struck down by an automobile and instantly killed only 20 minutes after he had left me.

He had been dead about two hours when he appeared to me in my room. Do you wonder that I now believe in ghosts? A. POLNER.

No. 1555 Forti-second street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

ghost rustled papers.

MANY years ago I was invited to visit a friend living near Saratoga Springs. The house was spacious, old-fashioned and on the Colonial style. One part was very old and had once been used as a roadside tavern, noted for good dinners and a well of sparkling water. The location was ideal, especially to one who loved to sketch and paint, being situated on a hill, where the surrounding mountains of every hue, dotted with fine

cattle, could be studied with delight. My friend's family consisted of Mr. Wheeler, a bachelor farmer, manager, maid and three farm hands. The guest chamber which was allotted to me was over the parlor, which had once been used as a barroom. The first night I slept soundly; the second night I heard papers rattling and other noises in the next room, but thought some squirrels had got in and were playing about; but as the noises continued I thought it best to investigate and see that the windows were closed and the papers gathered up.

What was my surprise the following night when I was awakened by a much greater rattling of papers and boxes being thrown from shelves. I lit the lamp and ventured to the top of the stairway and called my friend to come up, but she declined, as also did her brother. On returning to my room I saw walking along the hall what appeared to be a small, bent old woman leaning on a cane. Next morning I had a long talk with my hostess,

who acknowledged that the house was haunted.

She told me of a young man who used to come and play the violin, of others who were not happy and capricious of the old lady I had described.

A. D. B.

A Ghostly Warning

MANY years ago a real ghost paid me a visit. Never could I forget how the cold sweat poured out all over my body from fright, and for a whole week I was afraid to go to bed nights without a light.

I lay awake upon my bed. It was toward morning. With my eyes wide open I saw a ghost come right through the window—through glass and all. It came toward me. I could not see it walk; it seemed as if the air carried it along. In its hand it carried a branch of a tree like drooping willow. Three times the figure moved up and

down, pointing the branch at me, laid it down, then picked it right up, then turned its back and went the same way as it came—right through the window panes. It seemed it wanted to warn me or let me know something.

At this time a young lady died, broken hearted. She had taken a fancy to my sister and me, as we were alone and had no one to guide us. Before she died she kept calling one of us.

Next day when the knock came at the door my heart beat so fast I knew all about what was coming. Her last thoughts were of us. She really came to warn us about handsome, false men. One had broken her heart. I never forgot the story of her life or the ghost either.

B. J.

A Military Spirit

SOME years ago we lived in a large house that had not been occupied for some time, but did not know at the time that around the neighborhood it had the reputation of being haunted.

One evening, when I was alone in the house with the exception of a young child on the third floor, waiting for my folk to come home—for they had all gone out for the evening—I fell asleep on the sofa in the dining-room.

I had been sleeping about an hour. I found out afterward, when I was suddenly awakened by a feeling that someone was gazing intently at me—so intently that I was forced to open my eyes—and, looking up, I saw a man leaning on a cane, wearing a long coat with a cape to the waist, just as if he had at some time been in the army.

As he slowly passed by me he partly turned and, still keeping his eyes on mine, slowly went toward the large bay window, which had three separate windows in it. When he arrived at the end window he slowly turned, facing me, and with a different expression coming over his face, always with his eyes on mine, he disappeared in a mist or cloudy appearance around him through the shut and latched window.

MISS MARGARET RAPELYEA.
No. 115 Oak Ridge avenue, Summit, N. J.

FRUIT PASTES AND OTHER DAINTIES

IT is often a decided advantage to the housekeeper to make jelly out of a combination of fruits—sometimes because the combined flavor may be preferable to either alone and sometimes because it may be more economical, as, for instance, when she wishes to extend the flavor of some special fruit as quinces through a considerable amount of material less highly flavored, as apple. Sometimes, too, there is an advantage in both flavor and color, as when cranberry is combined with mild-flavored apples.

An excellent combination for home-made jelly, according to the home economics experts of the department, who have been studying the uses of different fruits, is cranberry with apple. Equal quantities of cranberries and of apples cut up into small pieces should be just covered with water and boiled until the fruit is soft. Strain the juice through cheesecloth. Add to the pulp the same amount of water as at first, boil the pulp a second time, strain as before, and combine the two lots of juice. Add three-fourths as much sugar

by measure to the juice and boil again. The jelly is done when a few drops taken up with a mixing spoon will flake on the spoon as it cools instead of dropping off of it. Pour the jelly into glasses which have just been sterilized in boiling water and thoroughly drained. Seal the glasses in the ordinary way.

The pulp which remains after the juice has been drained off for jelly can be used to make excellent "marmalade," or "fruit cheese," as old-time housekeepers called it. The pulp should be passed through a sieve, an equal weight of sugar added to it, and boiled until it is thick and firm. It must be stirred frequently, so that it will not burn. The thick marmalade should be poured into freshly scalded glasses or jars. While the color is not quite so good as jelly, the flavor is distinctive and good, and such "fruit cheese" is delicious when spread on bread and butter or when used for filling bread-and-butter sandwiches. If less sugar is added in making marmalade it can be used in place of fresh or dried ap-

ples for Brown Betty and similar fruit puddings.

A fruit paste somewhat similar to marmalade is well known in the Orient, and tests have shown that cranberry and apple make a paste of excellent flavor and that it can be readily made at home. Cook the pulp which remains from jelly making, with three-fourths of its weight of sugar, until it is very thick (about three-quarters of an hour), stirring constantly. For each pound of fruit it is the Oriental custom to stir in one-fourth of a pound of finely cut nuts (usually almonds, may be used at the housekeeper's convenience) and a little powdered cinnamon just before the kettle is taken from the fire. However, either nuts or cinnamon, or both, may be omitted, according to taste and preference. Spread the paste in buttered tins in a layer about one-half inch thick and set aside to cool and become firm. Then cut into squares or diamonds, spread the pieces on tin plates and dry out in a warm (but not hot) oven for a few hours.

When the paste is dry enough not to stick, pack it away in tin or other airtight boxes, putting paraffined paper between the layers. The pieces of paste may be dusted with powdered sugar to keep them from sticking, if one prefers.

Such fruit pastes are also very fine when made with quince alone or with quince and apple, or with cranberry and quince.

Fruit paste is not so easy to make as marmalade, but is a very palatable and wholesome sweet. One or two pieces of it will please the children for dessert or in the lunch box, while grown-ups will enjoy it as they do crystallized or candied fruit. It is worth while for the housekeeper who likes to economize in labor to remember that the paste keeps well and that not much more labor is required to make a large than a small quantity.

Finding an Excuse.
Judge.

"This fellow in the strait-jacket?" "Oh, he was about to perfect an efficiency system that would have made it impossible for any business man to get tired."

"So they said he was crazy?" "Of course! There has to be some excuse for these girl shows, hasn't there?"