

MRS. KATHERINE CHASE.

A TALK WITH A WOMAN WHO HAS HELPED MAKE HISTORY.

She Has a Farm Near Washington Now Which She Manages Herself—The Daughter of One of the "War Secretaries," Whose Life She Is Writing.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 8.—On a hill overlooking the capital city, in a house so old that nobody knows when it was built, lives Mrs. Katherine Chase. The former social queen and national belle is still a beautiful woman. "There is only one accomplishment of which I am proud," she says, "and that is the art of taking care of one's self. I do claim to be a master of that art, not only for myself, but for my children. I am always well, and for a woman to be always well is in these times to be quite abnormal, extraordinary. I have had my share of troubles in this world, but even my greatest troubles I have endeavored to bear in a philosophic manner. Since becoming a farmer I have learned that it is very bad policy to borrow money, but even borrowing money is preferable to borrowing trouble. I never borrow either."

"Then you are a farmer now?" "Oh, yes. My place here I manage all alone. I have a farmer, but he works rather than manages. If I had to pay for superintendence I am afraid I shouldn't make farming pay. What I don't know about farming I try to make up in caution. All my plans are very carefully laid. Here, see, I have sketches of all my fields. These I mark just how I want them plowed and planted, and then take good care that my plans are followed. Often I go out into the fields and literally follow the plow, walking along behind the farmer as he turns the first furrows, watching to see that he lays out the ground nicely. Then I come into the house, go up stairs and look out the windows to see how the work appears from a bird's eye view."

Mrs. Chase's house stands on a hill almost in the center of the farm, and a view from the windows brings all the fields within easy range of the eye. One of Mrs. Chase's theories is that with small additional trouble and no extra expense a little landscape art can be applied to practical agriculture. Though she has not as yet worked out all her ideas in this direction, one would have to travel a long way to find a prettier farm than the one which lies along the slopes of Edgewood. Mrs. Chase not only manages the farm, but goes almost every day to town to buy supplies. Everything that comes to the place is purchased by her, from reaper to wrench, from draught horse to pullet. She is a good financier, and actually manages to make her farm of some fifty acres pay a handsome profit.

It is an exceedingly valuable farm. But a mile from the city limits, and only two miles from the Capitol, it is already surrounded by suburban villas. An electric railway runs through the property, making it exceedingly desirable as a site for dwellings, and every day of her life the handsome and amiable mistress of Edgewood is called upon by real estate operators who want to purchase the farm and subdivide it into lots. Mrs. Chase is not ready to sell. Her idea is that the farm, for which she could now get probably \$2,000 an acre, will ultimately bring twice or thrice as much, and that her children will, some years hence, have greater need of the proceeds than they have now. Besides, Mrs. Chase loves the old place, and hopes to be able to keep it as long as she lives. It has halcyon memories of her father clinging about it, and Mrs. Chase's love for her father is deep and tender.

Mrs. Chase is now engaged upon a task that could be fairly called a labor of love. She is writing the life of her father, Salmon Portland Chase. She has been engaged at this for three or four years, and cannot yet say when the first volume will appear. "I work very hard," she said the other day while sitting on the veranda of Edgewood house looking down upon the Capitol that was the scene of so many of her father's triumphs, "but find that I am making slow progress. I rarely retire before 3 or 3 o'clock in the morning, because I like to work after everybody else is asleep and I know I shall not be disturbed. In this work I am harassed by a wealth of material. You have no idea of the enormous quantity of stuff that has poured in upon me. Letters, newspaper articles and documents are stacked up two or three feet thick all around the shelves of my work room. The most precious material I have is my father's diary. Throughout his public career it was his daily habit before going to bed to take a few minutes or sometimes half an hour to jot down memoranda concerning the occurrences of the day. In this way he has left behind him a record of every cabinet meeting that was held while he was secretary of the treasury. It is a record which cannot be disputed, and which probably nobody will try to dispute when it is made public. This diary I prize so highly, not only because it was kept by my father, but for its intrinsic worth as a contribution to history, that I keep it in a burglar proof, fireproof vault. While the actors in those scenes still lived the state secrets recorded in my father's diary could not have been made public without a violation of the proprieties. But now that the men are dead, the diary does not belong to me, but to the country, and the country shall have it. A great deal of my manuscript is finished, and I hope soon to be able to get out the first volume, though of the many offers made to me by publishers I have not yet accepted one.

"I am working carefully and slowly, because I do not want a single statement in my book that cannot be supported by the proofs. I do not want to be compelled after publication to wish a single line of it had been omitted. I am unwilling to write history as Mr. Hay and Mr. Nicolay have been doing it—by the distortion of facts, the quoting of parts of sentences, the omission of vital words and other garblings. I cannot afford to

do my work in that manner. It is my present intention to issue the book in two volumes, the first to deal with the period in which my father was a member of the Lincoln cabinet. My father's career was really divided into four epochs: First was his natural career as a private citizen and lawyer; then came his career as governor of Ohio and senator of the United States, involving all the great questions of those times—state rights, Missouri compromise and the Kansas-Nebraska bill; third, and to my mind most important of all, was his service as a member of the government during the war and his creation of the fiscal system, which historians have already declared saved the Union. My father's services to his country in this respect have, of course, been appreciated in a general way by his countrymen, but the keenest insight into the value of those services, the best comprehension of what they signified, I have found, oddly enough, among distinguished foreigners, notably Mr. Morgan, founder and London partner of the great firm of Drexel, Morgan & Co."

In the forthcoming volume Mrs. Chase will not endeavor to give many of her personal recollections of the great men and women whom she has met on both sides of the Atlantic. She says she is not fond of gossip, and that the writing of her recollections would be to her a difficult and ungrateful task. Such a book she may bring out later on, but for the present her hopes and her energies are fastened upon the life of her father. No one is so competent as she to describe the career, the daily life and work of the great statesman. By circumstances as much as by disposition forced into the self reliance of womanhood while yet a mere girl, her father early learned to trust her with his confidence and to seek her advice. When no more than 14 years old she was at the head of her father's house, the governor's mansion, at Columbus, O. Even at that tender age she had influence in the affairs of state. Politicians sought her friendship, and mothers and fathers, eager for pardons for their erring sons, counted the battle half won if they could enlist the governor's daughter on their side. Yet she knew her father well enough to have a very firm conviction that it would never do to ask him for clemency on any but the best of grounds, and so she formed the habit of carefully investigating every case that was presented to her. When she made her report, either for or against a pardon, the governor usually ratified with his signature and the seal of the state the conclusions of his girl minister. Governor Chase found the girl so apt at this work that he naturally fell into the habit of turning many of his pardon cases over to her.

"It often wrung my heart to disappoint the petitioners by handing in an adverse report," says Mrs. Chase. "There was one case I will remember to my dying day. The mother of a convict came to my house to see me. I was busy at the moment with another caller, and the woman sat down on the doorstep. Presently our big cat walked up to her purring, and the poor woman seized the cat, held it in her arms and said: 'Don't you know the trouble I am in, kitty? You would help me out of it if you could, wouldn't you, kitty?' And then she told the cat the whole story of how her boy had been led into evil ways by bad companions and finally sent to the penitentiary. It was done so naturally—her heart was so full she had to pour out her anguish on somebody—that I was deeply affected. But the circumstances were such that I could not recommend the young man's pardon."

Miss Chase took warm interest in the public institutions of her state. She was known to the inmates of the homes and asylums, and it is said that at one time she knew every prisoner at the penitentiary by name. Largely through her efforts, put forth before she was a woman, the Ohio idiot asylum, still a useful institution, was founded.

"I can hardly remember when my father did not place confidence in me far beyond my years," says Mrs. Chase. "When I was a mere chick of a girl, not more than 7 or 8, we lived in the outskirts of Cincinnati, where father practiced law. Every evening he used to drive home along the turnpike, he and I together. The horse was a fiery, speedy animal, which very much disliked to have any other horse pass it on the road. To make matters worse, this turnpike was used by the owners of fast horses as a speeding track, and great numbers of sulkeys were whizzing along in both directions at the hour when we usually drove home. Well, father had a habit of sitting in the carriage entirely oblivious to everything that was going on about him. On such occasions he handed the lines to me, apparently with full confidence that I could manage the spirited animal and escape all the dangers of the road. How I contrived to get father and myself home alive is more than I ever understood. Probably it was the capacity of the horse."

In speaking generally of the national sin of decrying people when their backs are turned, Mrs. Chase said: "My father was a model man in this respect, if in no other. In all the years of my confidential relationship with him I never heard him utter a disparaging word of any one." Mrs. Chase has with her at Edgewood her three daughters and a son, the last named, and eldest of the children, being now nearly 25. He is employed in a printing office, but wishes to become a civil engineer. The eldest daughter, Ethel, now 19, and a bright and pretty girl, has been in New York studying for the stage. She worked so hard that her health was threatened, and Mrs. Chase brought her home for a long rest. The Misses Sprague are all accomplished and daring horsewomen, and are often seen galloping along the country roads. It would not be easy to find a more interesting family. The remarkable woman who engaged the confidence of many great statesmen, and from whom even Abraham Lincoln has said he was often glad to take advice, is as vivacious and fascinating as when the social world was at her feet. WALTER WELLMAN.

ODDS AND ENDS.

The wheat yield in Kansas is estimated at 34,000,000 bushels, which is just double that of last year.

A Washington county, O., farmer 90 years old assists the hands in the harvest field.

A gentleman of Pomona, Cal., says that only five days have passed since March, 1888, that he has not had fresh strawberries on his table.

The actual consumption of sugar by the people of the United Kingdom amounted in 1888 to 1,083,000 tons. The consumption in 1888 was 100,000 tons more than in 1883.

The Bulgarian government has concluded a loan of \$5,000,000 with a New York bank. A syndicate was prepared to advance \$30,000,000 to the government.

Aluminum for dental purposes is said to be coming into favor. It is pronounced better than rubber, being bright, strong, colorless and wholesome, and less costly than gold.

Griffith Williams and a family of eight have left for Wales. They are survivors of the Johnstown flood. One of the children, who was born in the attic of a house that was floating along the stream, has been christened Moses.

A Havana dispatch says that numerous fissures have suddenly appeared in the earth near Matanzas and have created great alarm among the inhabitants of that vicinity. Some of the fissures are 600 feet long, 24 feet wide and 30 feet deep.

A Cincinnati man used 10,000 gallons of water on his lawn last year. His neighbor trusted to Providence to sprinkle his, and when the fall came he had the best lawn.

Eighteen Cincinnati grocers offer their customers 3 per cent. discount if they will carry home their purchases. They can afford to do even better than this, as some of them have to keep as many as eight horses, wagons and drivers.

A purse of \$10 was put up that two Arkansas men might make a test as to which could stand the mosquitoes the longest. Both stripped and sat down in a swamp. One gave in after twenty minutes, and the other stood it ten minutes longer.

The native doctors of China are to a great extent self constituted. Any person who is in want of a livelihood, and who can read and write sufficiently well to be able to copy out prescriptions from a medical book, can set up in practice without fear of government or other interference.

To be ambitious of true honor, of the true glory and perfection of our nature, is the very principle and incentive of virtue; but to be ambitious of titles, of place, of ceremonial respects and civil paucity is as vain and little as the things are which we court.—Sir P. Sidney.

A Greenland expedition has been planned for next summer. Seven men, under the command of an officer of the Danish royal navy, will leave Copenhagen in the spring, taking with them provisions sufficient for two and a half years. Their destination will be the east coast of Greenland, and they will explore it between the degrees of 66 and 73 north latitude.

One method of keeping the railroad track clear of sand near the Caspian sea is to soak the road bed with sea water. In other places it is protected with an armor of clay. Pails are erected sometimes to stop drifting. Another method employed is the sowing of hardy plants, such as are used for the same purpose on the Danish coast.

There are few that are not aware, at one time of their life or another, that they know a better way of living, of doing. Goodness consists in living thus better, in doing thus better. What is needed, then, is a school for learning, not so much what is to be done, as to do what we know ought to be done.—Ivan Panin.

A new candle has been brought out which extinguishes itself in an hour. This it does by means of a tiny extinguisher of tin, which is fastened in the wax by wires, and which effectually performs its task. It is only necessary to remove this diminutive extinguisher when its work is done, and the candle is again ready to burn another hour.

The huge organ for the town hall, Sydney, has been completed in London. Its most remarkable feature is a sixty-four foot stop. The lowest note of the stop, expressed in organ builders' language as "CCCCC," is two octaves below the lowest C on the pianoforte, and as it gives only eight vibrations in a second it cannot be perceived as a note at all. Its effect lies wholly in the extraordinary richness and power of its upper harmonics, by which it re-enforces notes given by the higher pipes.

Warned Away from Brazil.

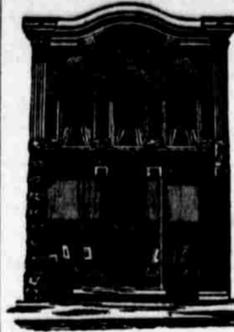
Emigrants to Brazil are warned by the experiences reported of those from Great Britain. Up to now the failure of British immigration in Brazil has been appalling. Cananea had one time 400 British colonists, whose survivors left in despair in 1878. There are now only three British families there in the forest without any road in any direction. Assunguy, which is only sixty miles from Curitiba, the capital of Parana, has now only about 100 British colonists out of 1,000 who were planted there some twenty years ago, the remainder having all died, or, like those at Cananea, having been transported back to England and Ireland at the public expense and in the utmost misery and degradation. Even today no sort of roads for carts have been made to Assunguy from anywhere, although the hard working Central Immigration society made a special request in the name of the residue of the colonists at Assunguy as lately as May, 1888. Although Italians are supposed to withstand the climate better, there has been a perfect blight upon Italian immigrant children during 1888 in the province of Sao Paulo.—London Letter.

Origin of Vitality.

What is the vital spark which animates organic life? The origin of vitality is as truly one of nature's dark secrets, utterly hidden from the eye of the scientific man of today as from the perceptions of the earnest inquirer of 4,000 years ago. There is more known of the method of its manifestations and growth than they knew, but whether a correlative or substantive of heat, light or electricity, whether measurable or immeasurable, there is one thing pretty well ascertained, and that is that there is a fixed quantity apportioned to things and to mankind, and that vitality is an individual allotment, a separate characteristic, so to speak, bestowed upon each individual member of the organic creation, no two things of the same variety and genus receiving the same quantity.—New York Telegram.

No Samples.

This little recenter reminds me of a young teacher who stood high in his profession throughout the state, but whose easy manners and conversation and absolute lack of pedagogical air caused him to be classed as every thing but a teacher when off his native heath. Sitting down opposite a traveling man one day in the cars, the latter immediately leaned forward and inquired: "Say, pard, what line do you carry?" "Brains." "Don't carry any samples, do you?"—St. Paul Pioneer Press.



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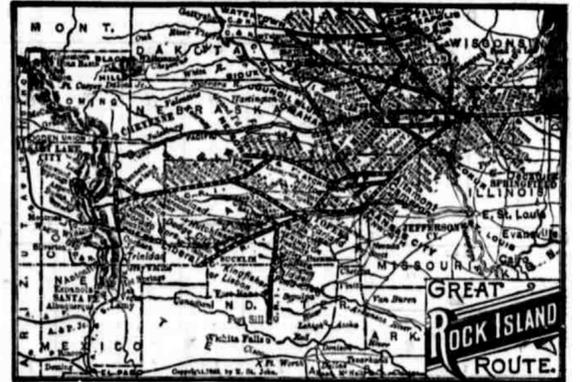
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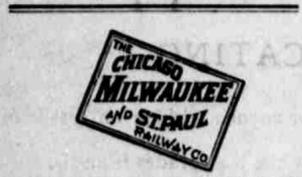
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