



TWELVE GREATEST AMERICAN WOMEN

Senorita Graciela Mandujano of Chile Asks A Big Question



SENIORITA GRACIELA MANDUJANO

By JOHN DICKINSON SHERMAN

WHO ARE the twelve greatest living American women? This embarrassing question is asked of the National League of Women Voters by Senorita Graciela Mandujano of Chile. The Chilean woman was a delegate to the Pan-American Conference of Women recently held at Baltimore in connection with a convention of the National League of Women Voters. She is a writer and she wants to write up the twelve for home publications. The question is indeed embarrassing. There is, for one thing, an embarrassment of riches. If there were only twelve women in the United States worthy of being named in answer to the question, all would be well. But the United States has so many great women—to say nothing of the famous ones!

It's also embarrassing to the National League of Women Voters, for the reason that to answer it the league must perforce name at least one of its own members.

And it's embarrassing to anyone asked to draw up a list—there are so many things to be considered. For example, from one viewpoint one would naturally name the "First Lady of the Land"—Mrs. Warren G. Harding—and from another Mary Pickford or Mary Garden or Geraldine Farrar or Mary Roberts Rinehart or Ida M. Tarbell or Edith Wharton.

Again, one might name Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont or Alice Paul of the National Woman's party of Mrs. Maud Wood Park of the National League of Women Voters; it depends upon whether one is or is not militant in the matter of women suffrage.

Again, if the list is to be made up of women who have won distinction in their respective fields



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of endeavor there is the difficulty that some of the names are not widely known. Such a list would be scorned by people who think only of popularity and notoriety and publicity.

Mary Garrett Hay, who wrote out a list upon the request of a newspaper, put the situation very well.

"It is impossible to do justice to American women by selecting a paltry twelve. Each person will select according to his mental bias. The women I have chosen conform to a type that I admire, the kind of woman who is highly educated, progressive, devoted to the ideals of the new womanhood, giving her life to serious work earnestly performed."

Anyway, the National League of Women Voters dodged making answer. It asked the Women's Joint Congressional Committee to make the selection. That body also dodged full responsibility and has announced that it will ask five prominent men to help in the selection. And at the present writing that is as near as Senorita Mandujano's question has come to receiving what may be called an official answer.

In the meantime scores of lists have made their appearance—some serious, some good, some bad, some indifferent.

In the lists the writer has seen the names of eighty-three women have been given, each selected as one of the twelve greatest living American women.

The observing reader has doubtless noted that the portraits given herewith number but eight, in addition to that of the woman who has started all this discussion. The reason is this: the writer would not dare to try to name the twelve greatest women. He is merely grouping the portraits of eight women who seem to be popular choices, inasmuch as they appear in nearly all the lists.

It is of course a work of supererogation to name and describe these eight women. However, they are:

- 1—Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, New York, honorary president National League of Women Voters, president International Suffrage Alliance, woman suffragist.
- 2—Miss Jane Addams, Hull House, Chicago, social worker, author and lecturer.
- 3—Miss Anne Tracey Morgan, New York, American Committee for Devastated France, philanthropist.
- 4—Miss Evangeline Cory Booth, New York, commander of the Salvation Army, religious worker.
- 5—Miss M. Carey Thomas, Bryn Mawr, Pa., retiring president of Bryn Mawr college, educator and author.
- 6—Mrs. Thomas G. Winter, Minneapolis, president of the General Federation of Women's clubs, club woman and writer.
- 7—Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton, Warren, O., vice chairman Republican National Committee, suffragist and author.
- 8—Miss Alice Mary Robertson, Muskogee, member of national house of representatives from Oklahoma, Indian educator.

Other names that frequently appear in the many unofficial lists are these: Edith Wharton, novelist; Ida M. Tarbell, author; Cecelia Beaux, artist; Julia C. Lathrop, worker for children; Mrs. Raymond Robins, sociologist; Helen Keller, leader of blind; Maude Adams, actress; Mme. Louise Homer, singer; Mme. Schumann-Heink, singer; Mary Garrett Hay, club woman; Julia Marlowe, actress; Agnes Repplier, essayist; Mary Garden, singer; Geraldine Farrar, singer; Mary Pickford, screen star; Mary Roberts Rinehart, novelist.

Daddy's Evening Fairy Tale
by MARY GRAHAM BONNER
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BLACKSNAKE GOSSIP

"There was once someone," said the Blacksake, "who talked to some people about gossip. This talker told the people that it was bad, to gossip, and that they must keep from talking about others.

"The talker told how it got people into trouble and caused unhappiness and sorrow. And then the talker told the people to each take the talk to themselves and not think it was intended for their neighbors.

"But alas, and alack, the people talked of how the talk had been just such a talk as their neighbors needed, and didn't take the lesson to heart as they should have done.

"Now I am hoping that people will take my lesson to heart.

"I hope they will not say that they do not gossip but will listen to my talk and will take pains to undo the harm that has been done and not gossip ever, ever again.

"Such gossip has gone about regarding me and regarding my family. 'Bit by bit I shall talk of the stories that have been told about me, and I will tell of how untrue they are.

"In the first place of all I do not squeeze my prey until it is killed. I am not a constrictor, and a constrictor does that.

"I have never done that and I will never do that, though people will



"I Prefer Nice Little Snakes."

often say that the Blacksake does do that.

"In the second place I do not attack the rattlesnake. And why should I? He is a bigger creature than I am. I am a good-sized creature, it is true. In fact, I am very long and I'd be considered anywhere a good-sized snake.

"But Mr. Rattlesnake is not an interesting snake to me. He is too big. I prefer nice little snakes of smaller size.

"I'm not above eating a smaller snake. Oh, no, I'm not above that. And I suppose that is the way the story got about that I attacked the Rattlesnake.

"That is the way with stories. They're founded, perhaps, on just a little scrap of truth, and then they are added to and added to until they're nothing at all like the story was in the first place.

"I suppose some one said that we ate smaller snakes than ourselves. And then the story was spread about and added to until it was said we even ate Rattlesnakes.

"I admit that we do like smaller snakes. We haven't any reason for not liking them. They're very good little snakes; that is, snakes smaller than we are we consider very good.

"But we don't go after Rattlesnakes. We keep away from them, hiss, hiss. We don't like Rattlesnakes. No, no indeed hiss, hiss, hiss.

"Then it has been said about us that we go after people and jump for them. This is not true at all.

"If we are cornered we will fight bravely, but we do not go after people.

"We're not fond of them and we keep out of the way of them. And yet this untrue story has gone about that we go after people and that we are very dangerous to them because we go seeking them.

"I hope that all this gossip will be stopped before long, for it is most unfair.

"I like to have the truth known about me, but I do not like to hear gossip.

"I don't gossip about other snakes and I don't gossip about people. So I wish they wouldn't gossip about me!

"I wish that tremendously. I have also heard that I can look at a bird so that the bird doesn't know which way to move, and that I make the bird stay quite still just by looking at him.

"They say that I do this so as to capture the bird quite easily.

"But I can't look at a bird so he'll stay quite still. I can't do anything like that. That is a most untrue story.

"If I looked at a bird he wouldn't stay quite still until I caught him, no, indeed. I know better than that!"

"So, everybody, please remember what I've said, and don't gossip about the poor old Blacksake. It is most unkind, for what you say isn't true!"

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