

MARYLAND'S DEBT TO MARGARET BRENT

By ALVA E. BELMONT.

IT must forever remain a matter of pardonable pride to all true Southerners when they realize that the South was responsible for America's first suffragist, Mistress Margaret Brent of Maryland, who in 1647 demanded "place and voyce in the assembly," as executor and representative of Lord Baltimore. And it must forever remain a reflection on our boasted "Southern chivalry" that justice was denied her by the men who were forced to admit that the entire colony was under deep obligation for the financial help, the marvelous ability, and the patriotic devotion of this valiant young woman. They gladly accepted all that she so freely gave, but sanctimoniously insisted upon legislating her into the prescribed sphere of their limited imagination when she in her official capacity asked for the legal recognition to which the lowliest male property-holder in the colony was entitled.

Were Margaret Brent to catch a glimpse of the woman suffrage map today, she would doubtless sustain a violent shock upon making the incredible discovery that "Southern chivalry" on this particular question occupies almost identically the same position in which she found it in 1647, nearly 300 years ago. Political equality appears to be the only great principle which has remained stationary in the Solid South throughout the centuries, hedged about by prejudice and an unyielding spirit of sex-antagonism.

In reading and discussing the probable results of the war now raging in Europe, we find the general prediction to be that it will furnish the means of creating a wider and truer democracy the world over, which is regarded by the majority of people as so hopeful and desirable an outcome of the terrible conflict that in their minds it justifies the system of wholesale slaughter and destruction of life and property which has become too horrible to contemplate.

If democracy is worth this colossal price to men, is it not astonishing, incomprehensible, that they persist in refusing to share its advantages with women? How can they reconcile themselves to the inconsistency of advocating liberal laws, and causing bloodshed in the interest of the principles of democracy and progression, while stubbornly clinging to the undemocratic and reactionary system of maintaining a sex aristocracy by refusing to recognize women as their political equals?

It is not unusual for suffragists to find themselves accused of creating a sex war when we suggest the enfranchisement of women, while it is obvious that it is we who are endeavoring with all the strength of which

we are capable to avoid the almost inevitable war of the sexes by concentrating our efforts on securing sex equality, universal suffrage, equal opportunity for all the people, which is the real interpretation of democracy, and the only haven which can or will leaven the whole human race.

The woman suffrage movement is responsible for the splendid spirit of co-operation which has developed among women. It has awakened them to a realization of the value of organizing, of standing together, understanding each other, cultivating tolerance, bearing each other's burdens, sharing prosperity and relieving distress; at all times willing to put one's self in the other person's place, and never overlooking the other's point of view.

Democracy among women has become a recognized factor as well as a great educator, and is leading them to a broader and better understanding of their relation to each other and to the world. Having progressed to this extent, overcoming the obstacles and prejudices of generations, is it logical to suppose that the existing political aristocracy can be allowed to encumber the earth much longer and hold back the wheels of progress? We should be untrue to the fundamental principles upon which our government is based if we remained inactive in this crisis, antagonistic to the trend of the times, and in direct opposition to the nation's development.

It was Benjamin Franklin who said: "They who have no voice nor vote in the electing of representatives do not enjoy liberty, but are absolutely enslaved by those who have votes." And it is an accepted fact in the United States that "government derives its just power from the consent of the governed."

Therefore, as patriotic citizens of the Land of Liberty, we suffragists assert that it is an insult to the American flag and the Republic over which it floats to deny to one-half its people the rights and privileges claimed and used by the other half, and that it is a blot upon our country's honor which future generations will regard with curiosity and shame.

As a native of the South myself, I have always felt a deep interest and personal pride in the first American suffragist, and it would seem that Maryland's debt to Margaret Brent could be cancelled in no more chivalrous manner than through the speedy enfranchisement of the women of the State, whose welfare in colonial days was her first concern, and for which she made heroic sacrifices. What a splendid opportunity for Maryland manhood to redeem itself and correct the mistake of 1647!



Mrs. OLIVER H. P. BELMONT.

ROUTE OF THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER EXPEDITION

May 31—Glenburnie	3 P. M.	June 9—Great Mills	11 A. M.
Severnah	8 P. M.	Leonardtwn	8 P. M.
June 1—Annapolis—		June 10—Clements	2 P. M.
Front of Courthouse	12 M.	Chaptico	8 P. M.
Eastport at bridge	5:15 P. M.	June 11—Newport	3 P. M.
Main and Conduit Sts.	8 P. M.	Bel Alton	8 P. M.
June 2—Edgewater	11 A. M.	June 12—Port Tobacco	3 P. M.
Scrabletown	2 P. M.	La Plata	8 P. M.
Galesville	8 P. M.	June 14—Pomonkey	8 P. M.
June 3—Shadyside	10 A. M.	June 15—White Plains	3 P. M.
Deals	1 P. M.	Waldorf	8 P. M.
Friendship	8 P. M.	June 16—Hughesville	8 P. M.
June 4—Mt. Harmony	10 A. M.	June 17—Charlotte Hall	3 P. M.
Sunderland	2 P. M.	June 18—Mechanicsville	8 P. M.
Prince Fredericktown	8 P. M.	June 19—Bryantown	8 P. M.
June 5—Port Republic	10 A. M.	June 21—Brandywine	8 P. M.
St. Leonard's	1 P. M.	June 22—Upper Marlborough	8 P. M.
Solomon's Island	8 P. M.	June 23—Washington, D. C.	
June 7—Millstone Landing	5 P. M.	June 24—Laurel	8 P. M.
June 8—St. Mary's City	3 P. M.	June 25—Baltimore.	
		June 26—Mt. Washington, J. G. L. Picnic.	

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