

DR. MARIE ZAKRZEWSKA.

FUNERAL ORATION BY WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, AND HER OWN FAREWELL ADDRESS.¹

A large number of the friends of Dr. Marie Zakrzewska, the founder of the New England Hospital for Women and Children, gathered on May 15th in the chapel of the Massachusetts Crematory Society, off Walkhill street, Forest Hills, to pay a last tribute of respect to her memory.

The service was as simple as possible, and was made most impressive by the reading of a farewell address to her friends, written by Dr. Zakrzewska in February, with the request that it be read at her funeral. The body reposed in a black broadcloth-covered casket, on which were laid a few green wreaths. The request that flowers be omitted was observed.

The services opened as follows with an

ORATION BY WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

“We are gathered this lovely spring afternoon to testify our respect and love for a dear friend. She has anticipated this occasion by preparing her own address, presently to be read by another. Being dead she yet speaketh. For this remarkable woman’s strong individuality could not be veiled, and, regardless of conventional forms, she has elected to have this simple service without clerical aid.

“She had no politic methods, no skill in concealing opinions that traversed those in vogue, but her manifest sincerity of soul attracted helpers whom policy would have repelled. Although not literally the first regular woman physician in Boston she was, *par excellence*, the head of the long line of educated women who adorn and dignify the ranks of the profession in this vicinity. She won and kept the same proud position elsewhere held by her venerable surviving friends, Doctors Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell.

“The very success of her students, consequent upon her faithful conflict against a senseless prejudice, serves now to obscure the

¹ Reported in *The Boston Herald*, May 16.

trials and disappointments that then blocked the way. The same solemn objections that are to-day urged to obstruct the further progress of women were then actively employed to show the danger of admitting the sex to the practice of medicine. Puerile and unworthy as they now seem, they furnished an apparently impassable barrier to reform. Patience, persistence, resolution and unshaken faith were needed by this apostle, and did not fail her. Now her triumphs and services have become historic records, while the New England Hospital, whose foundation she laid in tribulation, is at once her monument and the city's pride.

“Aside from her professional labors she contributed to the moral advance of the community and was herself a centre of independent thought. Invaluable are untrammelled expressions of sincere belief regardless of agreement. They furnish a tonic all too scarce, and many a word of our friend's that seemed impulsive proved stimulating and helpful to the disturbed hearer. If brusqueness at times gave momentary offence it was readily condoned as inseparable from the saving quality of frankness.

“That Dr. Zakrzewska shared for so many years the companionship of that great German, Karl Heinzen, one of the bravest and truest of reformers, was high testimony to her intellect and heart. For, absorbing as were her professional labors, she always found time for thought and service in unpopular causes where freedom was at stake. In a pro-slavery community she was an outspoken and radical abolitionist, the friend of Garrison and Phillips. In the movement for the political enfranchisement of women she took her place in the ranks of the faithful, an honored comrade with Lucy Stone, Mrs. Howe, the Sewalls and other veterans of the struggle. From the inception of the Women's Club she was a prominent member.

“Living in an environment of religious formality she remained firmly outside the pale of theological influence; and if she found satisfaction in Theodore Parker's sermons, it was because of their humanity regardless of speculations on the future life of which she was a frank unbeliever. No threats of punishment hereafter would tempt her to misreport the message which her reason brought. In this respect her monumental integrity paralleled that of Harriet Martineau. Whatever reality there may be in the heaven pictured by devout minds, it is safe to say that no celestial city that bars out such souls as this for unbelief would be worth the seeking. We can surely testify that she helped make this city more celestial than she found it.

“Our friend, although of foreign birth, became, from her contrasted experience, more American than most Americans. She loved her adopted country profoundly, and when revisiting her native land turned always gladly to this as her true home. It is to her honor that love never blinded her to the nation’s faults, nor caused her to withhold her protest against its evil courses. She deplored its present reactionary tendency, and the abasement of its ideals clouded her last days.

“Few more precious gifts has Europe presented to America than this cosmopolitan citizen whose presence blessed and uplifted this country of her choice.”

* * *

At the conclusion of his remarks, Mr. Garrison introduced Mrs. Emma Merrill Butler, who read

DR. ZAKRZEWSKA'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.

“During my whole lifetime I have had my own way as much as any human being can have it without entirely neglecting social rules or trespassing upon the comforts of others more than is necessary for self-preservation. And now upon this occasion I wish to have my own way in taking leave of those who shall come for the last time to pay such respect as custom, inclination and friendship shall prompt, asking them to accept the assurance that I am sorry to pass from them, this time never to return again.

“While these words are being read to you, I shall be sleeping a peaceful, well deserved sleep, a sleep from which I shall never arise. My body will go back to that earthly rest whence it came. My soul will live among you, even among those who will come after you. I am not speaking of fame, nor do I think that my name, difficult though it be, will be remembered. Yet the idea for which I have worked, the seeds which I have tried to sow here and there, must live and spread and bear fruit. And after all, what matters it who prepared the way wherein to walk? We only know that great and good men and women have always lived and worked for an idea which favored progress. And so I have honestly tried to live out my nature, not actuated by an ambition to be somebody, or to be remembered especially, but because I could not help it.

“The pressure which in head and in heart compelled me to see and think ahead, compelled me to love to work for the benefit of womankind in general, irrespective of country or of race. By this I do not wish to assert that I thought of all women before I

thought of myself! Oh, no! It was just as much in me to provide liberally for my tastes, for my wishes, for my needs. I had about as many egotistical wants to be supplied as the average of mankind. To look out for self, for those necessary to my happiness, I always considered not a pleasure only, but a duty. I despised the weakness of characters who could not say 'no' at any time, and thus gave away and sacrificed all their strength of body and mind, as well as their money, with that soft sentimentality which finds assurance in the belief that others will take care of them as they have taken care of others.



DR. MARIE E. ZAKRZEWSKA.

“But in taking leave, I cannot pass by those who in every possible way in which human beings can assist one another have assisted me, by giving me their true friendship. Of my earliest career in America, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell has been the most powerful agent in strengthening what was weak in me, while, shortly after, my acquaintance with Miss Mary L. Booth fed the enthusiasm kindled by Dr. Blackwell and strengthened me in my uphill path.

“The friendship of these two women forms the corner-stone upon which I have built all my life long. To many valuable friends in New York I owe a deep gratitude, and especially to Mrs. Robert G. Shaw, of Staten Island. In Boston I leave a great number of friends without whom I could never have accomplished anything, and who have developed my character as well as faculties dormant within me, of which I was unaware. It is the contact with people of worth which develops and polishes us and illuminates our every thought and action.

“To me the most valuable of these early friends were Miss

Lucy Goddard, Mrs. Ednah D. Cheney, Mrs. George W. Pond, Mrs. James Freeman Clark, Mrs. George R. Russell, Dr. Lucy E. Sewall, and Dr. Helen Morton,—not that I give to others a place lower than to them, but because I am fully conscious how deeply they affected my innermost life and how each one made its deep imprint upon my character. I feel that whatever work may be ascribed to my hand could not have been done without them. Although I could not number them in the list of other friends who, in a special sense, formed a greater part of my life's affections, still I owe to each and every one a great debt, and I wish now, whether they be still alive or in simple tribute to their memory, to tell of them my appreciation of their kindness.

“To those who formed the closer family circle in my affections, Mr. Karl Heinzen, Miss Julia A. Sprague and my sisters, I have tried to show my gratitude during the whole of my life, on the principle of Freiligrath's beautiful poem :

‘ O lieb, so lang du lieben kannst ;
O lieb, so lang du lieben magst ;
Die Stunde kommt, die Stunde kommt,
Wo du an Gräbern stehst und klagst.’

“And now, in closing, I wish to say farewell to all those who thought of me as of a friend, to all those who were kind to me, assuring them all that the deep conviction that there can be no further life is an immense rest and peace to me. I desire no hereafter. I was born, I lived, I used my life to the best of my ability for the uplifting of my fellow-creatures, and I enjoyed it daily in a thousand ways. I had many a pang, many a joy, every day of my life, and I am satisfied now to fall a victim to the laws of nature, never to rise again, never to see and know again what I have seen and known in my life.

“As deeply sorry as I always have been when a friend left me, just so deeply sorry shall I be to leave those whom I loved ; yet I know that I must submit to the inevitable, and submit I do, —as cheerfully as a fatal illness will allow. I have already gone in spirit, and now I am going in body, and all that I leave behind is my memory in the hearts of the few who always remember those whom they have loved. Farewell.



The address was signed : “M. E. Zakrzewska. Prepared in February, 1902.”¹

¹ This signature is not that appended to Dr. Zakrzewska's Farewell Address, but is taken from a letter to the editor of *The Open Court*.

[When Mrs. Butler concluded the reading of Dr. Zakrzewska's farewell address to her friends, Mrs. Ednah D. Cheney arose and in a few brief words paid a loving tribute to the memory of her friend.

Among those present were :

Mme. Heinzen, Mr. and Mrs. Heinzen, Miss Hattie Heinzen, Mrs. Hollingsworth, Miss Julia Sprague, Mr. and Mrs. Steinberg, Mr. Reichter, Mr. Cronize, Mr. and Mrs. W. Smith, Dr. Elizabeth Pope, Dr. Augusta Pope, Dr. Elizabeth Kellar, Dr. Fanny Berlin, Miss Anna Reichter, Mrs. Ednah D. Cheney, Miss Rose Heinzen, Emil Richter, Mr. and Mrs. Dary, Miss Kuhn, Francis Garrison, Louis C. Elson, Babson S. Ladd, Mrs. Elizabeth Peabody, Mrs. Crosby, Miss Floretta Vining, Mrs. Thomas Mack, Miss Julia A. Sprague, Frederick May, Albert E. Parsons, Dr. Mary Hobart, Dr. Clara Alexander, Mrs. S. A. P. Dickerman, Mrs. Farless, Miss Eva Channing, Mrs. H. M. Laughlin, Mrs. A. S. Copeland, Miss Sarah Copeland, Mrs. L. H. Williams, Mrs. Perkins, Miss Lucia M. Peabody, Henry B. Blackwell, Fräulein Antonie Stolle, John Ritchie, Richard C. Humphries, Dr. Emma Call, Miss Lucia Peabody.

All of the physicians of the New England Hospital were present, also representatives of the various women's organisations of which Dr. Zakrzewska was a member]

SKETCH OF DR. ZAKRZEWSKA'S LIFE.

BY MRS. EDNAH D. CHENEY.¹

Born and educated in Berlin, Prussia, Dr. Zakrzewska began her medical studies and her practical experience in a hospital at a very early age. At that time the practice of the profession was not open to women in Germany, and she looked across the water for the fuller opportunities and wider activity which then had opened to women in America in 1847, and which she felt to be needful to her own work.

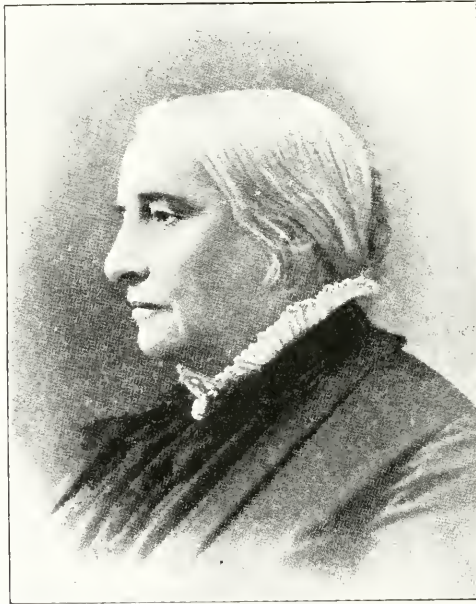
The Western Reserve Medical School of Cleveland at that time admitted women. She went thither, and gained there a command of the English language so necessary to her, while she continued the professional studies already familiar to her, and there received her degree as M. D. This medical school afterward withdrew the privilege it had extended to women, because the Pennsylvania College for Women was greatly enlarged; but if in this short period it had done nothing but put its professional seal upon this one woman's work, it would deserve the gratitude of all who have since profited by her life and experience.

She went to New York and engaged with the pioneers, Drs. Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell, in the establishment of the New York Infirmary for Women and Children. Visiting Boston in 1856

¹ Reproduced from *The Woman's Journal*.

for the purpose of raising funds for the new undertaking, she became known to many persons interested in the medical education of women, and was offered a position as professor in the Female Medical College.

She would take the position only on condition that clinical instruction should be provided for, and she organised a hospital department for medical and obstetric cases. After three years she severed her connection with the medical school, and, the great value of clinical instruction having been proved, friends joined her in establishing our present "New England Hospital," for the spe-



MRS. EDNAH D. CHENEY.¹

cial purpose of affording such instruction to women college graduates. Her previous experience in hospital life was all-important in organising the new institution, and as director she took an active part in the business affairs as well as in the medical management of the hospital. Her large private medical practice gave her a wide acquaintance with influential people whose interest in the institution contributed to its permanent support. As attending phy-

¹ Mrs. Ednah D. Cheney, whose portrait we reproduce here, is one of the leading women of New England, an author who is widely known throughout the United States, a defender of women's rights in the proper sense of the term, a speaker of extraordinary force, and all in all an exceptional personality typical of New England womanhood.

sician she took her full share of all the daily duty of the hospital, while her instruction and counsel were of the greatest value to the internes who were preparing for return service.

As presiding officer, she still retained her influence in all the professional work, and she was always ready to afford young students her advice and assistance in their professional career.

A sound intellect and a large and sympathetic heart unselfishly devoted to the service of humanity, and especially to the welfare of her own sex, have made her service in Boston for thirty-seven years an incalculable blessing to thousands of women whom she has helped to a life of health, usefulness, and happiness.

REMINISCENCES.¹

Dr. Zakrzewska was a woman of remarkable ancestry. She was descended on one side from a gipsy queen. Her father was a Pole and had large possessions in Poland, which she might have claimed; but it would have been so expensive (involving the payment of heavy taxes, etc.) that she never did.

Her father was at Berlin, serving in the Prussian army, when a Polish insurrection broke out. For some expression of sympathy with it, he was suspended from the army, on a small fraction of his pay, but was not allowed to engage in any other work, as he was liable at any time to be recalled. This reduced the family to poverty. Marie's mother went into a government institution for the training of midwives, and had to live in a given quarter of the town, which was assigned to her as her field of work. She rented a house, meaning to take lodgers, but no lodgers came. Marie vividly remembered one Saturday evening when her mother came home and found the children all crying, frightened by a great thunderstorm. She had been able to bring home only one dollar to carry them over Sunday; and she sank into a chair and burst into tears. Little Marie, the oldest of the children, was about ten years old. She did her best to comfort her tired mother, and said that she would herself go out and buy the food for Sunday, laying out the small sum of money to the best advantage. Marie early became a caretaker. She used to study her lessons for school, knit, and rock the cradle, all at the same time.

Marie helped her mother in her work as a midwife. She began early to take an interest in medicine, and went into a hospital

¹Mrs. Cheney communicates these reminiscences in an interview for publication in *The Woman's Journal*.

while still extremely young. One of the professors was very friendly. He told her that she might study medicine with him, and that he would get leave from the government to have her take a degree. But one day, when she came to the hospital, she found it hung with black, and learned that her friend, the professor, had suddenly died. It was after this that she went to America.

While she was studying in Cleveland, Mrs. Caroline M. Sevrance became one of her best friends.

After she went to New York, she had a very hard struggle to live. Her sister joined her, and for a time they supported them-



ZAKRZEWSKA BUILDING.

Original building of the group comprising the New England Hospital for Women and Children.¹

selves by knitting. But more prosperous days were in store for her.

She visited Philadelphia and Boston to get funds for the New York Infirmary for Women and Children, and the ladies in Boston raised half the rent. Frederick May was among the best helpers. Samuel E. Sewall was one of the trustees of the Female Medical School, and it was he who wanted her to come and help in it.

She took a great interest in humanity, and in people of all kinds. She instituted an eight-cent lunch for shop girls, and a

¹ Reproduced from a photograph taken by A. H. Folsom, for which we are indebted to Dr. S. M. Taylor, Superintendent of the Hospital.

varied lunch for school children, giving them something different each day, so as to avoid monotony. She was much interested in the Jews and in the Jewish school. She would take as much pains with a poor girl as with the richest lady, and the poor people were very fond of her.

It is not true, as has been said, that she had "few social interests outside her practice and her work at the hospital." She had many warm friends. She used to be fond of going to Mr. Sewall's and there having "a dance and a really jolly time." She was a member of the Woman Suffrage Association, the Moral Education Association, the New England Women's Club, the Roxburghe Club, and other societies. She had ceased to be attending physician at the hospital, but was still consulting physician. The main building of the hospital was named for her when she was seventy.

She was of a cheery disposition, though she had had much trouble in her life, besides the early struggles already described. Her mother sailed for America to join her, but died on the voyage. She also lost a very dear sister.

Dr. Zakrzewska never married. For many years she and her devoted friend, Miss Julia Sprague, have made their home together.