

A  
WOMAN OF THE CENTURY

FOURTEEN HUNDRED-SEVENTY BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES  
ACCOMPANIED BY PORTRAITS  
OF

LEADING AMERICAN WOMEN

IN ALL WALKS OF LIFE

EDITED BY

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ASSISTED BY A CORPS OF ABLE CONTRIBUTORS



BUFFALO  
CHICAGO NEW YORK  
CHARLES WELLS MOULTON

1893

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Soon after Mrs. Filley removed to her country home in North Haverhill, N. H. Upon her uncle's death, in 1880, she bought his large stock farm, which she has since conducted. It was a dairy farm, and



MARY A. POWERS FILLEY.

though entirely new work to her, she learned the process of butter-making, found a market in Boston for her butter and made one year as much as 4,000 pounds. In connection with the dairy work she continued to raise a fine grade of Jersey stock. Finding the work too great a tax upon her strength, she sold the greater portion of her stock and turned the farm into a hay farm. While raising stock, her attention was called to the fact that the average man is cruel to animals, and it has been one of her special points to teach by precept and example the good effects of kindness to dumb animals. Her interest in all reforms has been active. From her small community she has sent long petitions to Congress for equal suffrage. She has drawn lecturers into the village, and in many ways made the moral atmosphere of those around her better for her having lived among them.

**FILLMORE, Mrs. Abigail Powers**, wife of President Fillmore, born in Stillwater, Saratoga county, N. Y., in March, 1798. Her father was Rev. Lemuel Powers, a well-known Baptist clergyman, a man of Massachusetts ancestry. He died in 1799, and the widow was left in straitened circumstances. In 1809 she removed to Central New York, where she made her home with her brother in Cayuga county. Abigail was a brilliant girl, and soon gained enough education to enable her to teach school. She taught and studied diligently, and acquired a remarkably wide and deep education. While living in Cayuga county she became acquainted with Millard Fillmore, then a youth "bound out" to learn the trade of a clothier and fuller, but who was devoting every spare moment to books. He abandoned the trade to study law, and removed to Erie county to practice.

In February, 1826, they were married in Moravia, N. Y. Mrs. Fillmore took an active interest in her husband's political and professional career. In 1828 he was elected to the State Legislature, and his success was largely due to the assistance of his wife. They were poor, but they made poverty respectable by their dignity and honesty. After serving three years in the State Legislature, Mr. Fillmore was elected to Congress. In 1830 they settled in Buffalo, N. Y., where prosperity smiled upon them. When her husband became President of the United States, she presided over the White House, but she had only recently been bereaved by the death of her sister, and she shrank from the social duties involved. Her daughter, Miss Mary Abigail Fillmore, relieved the mother of the onerous duties attached to her position. Under their régime the White House became a center of literary, artistic, musical and social attractions somewhat unusual. Mrs. Fillmore died in Washington, 30th March, 1853.

**FINLEY, Miss Martha**, author, born in Chillicothe, Ohio, 26th April, 1828. She has lived many years in Maryland. Her father, Dr. James B. Finley, was the oldest son of General Samuel Finley, a Revolutionary officer, major in the Virginia line of cavalry, afterward general of militia in Ohio, and of Mary Brown, daughter of one of Pennsylvania's early legislators. Her maternal grandmother was the daughter of Thomas Butler, who was a great-grandson of that Duke of Ormond who was influential in making the treaty of Utrecht. The Finleys and Browns are of Scotch-Irish descent and have martyr blood in their veins. The name of their clan was Farquarharson, the Gaelic of Finley, and for many years Miss Finley used that name as her pen-name. The Butlers were



MARTHA FINLEY.

military men. Five of Miss Finley's great-uncles of that name were in the war of the Revolution, two of them on Washington's staff. One of her great-uncles, Dr. Finley, was one of the early

presidents of Princeton College. Her grandfathers, both on her father's and mother's side, were wealthy. Her grandfather Finley received large tracts of land from the Government in acknowledgment of his services to his country during the Revolution. He laid out and owned the town of Newville, Pa. Some of his land was in Ohio, and he finally removed to that State. In the winter of 1853 Miss Finley began her literary career by writing a newspaper story and a little book published by the Baptist Board of Publication. Between 1856 and 1870 she wrote more than twenty Sunday-school books and several series of juveniles, one series containing twelve books. These were followed by "Casella" (Philadelphia, 1869), "Peddler of LaGrave," "Old Fashioned Boy" (Philadelphia, 1871), and "Our Fred" (New York, 1874). It is through her "Elsie" and "Mildred" series that she has become popular as a writer for the young. Of the "Elsie" series there have been seventeen published, and she is at work upon another. The "Mildred" series is also very popular, six of that series having been published. Miss Finley's pen has not been employed in writing exclusively for the young. She has written three novels "Wanted—A Pedigree" (Philadelphia, 1879), "Signing the Contract" (New York, 1879), and "Thorn in the Nest" (New York, 1886). Miss Finley resides in Elkton, Cecil county, Md., in a cottage which she has built in a pleasant section of that town.

**FISHER, Miss Anna A.**, educator, born in Cambridge, N. Y., in 1858. She comes of New England parentage and inherited from her father a taste for literature and history, and her early reading and education were well and wisely directed. From

principal of Wyoming Seminary, Kingston, Pa., she passed nine years of eminent usefulness, giving an amount of mentality and strength that left a marked impression upon that institution. She is a graduate of Antioch College, from which institution she received her degree of A. M. In connection with teaching she has found great delight in continuing her studies in certain lines of work, especially literature and history. An associate member of the committee on education in the World's Congress, she has had various positions of honor offered her. She was a candidate for consideration as president of Barnard College. In the autumn of 1891 she was elected to the chair of literature in Denver University, Col., and is now lady principal. She is filling that position successfully.

**FISHER, Mrs. Rebecca Jane Gilleland**, philanthropist, born in Philadelphia, Pa., in 183-



REBECCA JANE GILLELAND FISHER.

Her maiden name was Gilleland. On both her father's and mother's side she is of distinguished ancestry, and belongs to the Johnstone, Barber and Chase families. Her parents were highly cultured and devout members of the Old School Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Fisher's father moved to Texas with his family in an early day, believing it to be a good place for investment, but utterly ignorant of frontier life. Never having been inured to hardships, they were ill-prepared for the trials which awaited them. Her father joined the Texas army in 1838, and soon after both parents were killed by the Indians. In a few hours after their death, loving ones took charge of the daughter and did all that was possible for her comfort and happiness. Mrs. Fisher's fondness for literature was shown at an early age. For many years she has contributed articles for the press, which have received high encomiums. She was educated in Rutgersville College, and in May, 1848, she became the wife of Rev. Orceneth Fisher, D. D. California, Oregon and Texas have been their especial fields of labor. For forty-five years she



ANNA A. FISHER.

her mother she inherited many charms of person, and a poise of character marked by decision, excellence of judgment, great force and a heart full of tenderness and thoughtfulness for others. As