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Before Women Were Human Beings

Adventures of an American Fellow in German Universities of the '90s
By IDA H. HYDE

EARLY in the last decade of the nineteenth century, a polemic between two European professors pertaining to the development of an organism they were investigating, led to bitter personal criticisms that finally appeared in print. The controversy aroused the interest of embryologists in this country, particularly a student in Bryn Mawr College, who without knowing of these professors was conducting experiments on the very problem about which the dispute centered.

The results obtained by the student in her investigation corroborated those published by one of the disputants, Professor Goette of the University of Strassburg. When Goette was informed of this fact he was very much elated. Eager to have his interpretation of the results strengthened and the investigation of the problem variously extended, he invited the student to come to the University of Strassburg and continue study of the subject in his department.

This invitation came to me as a complete surprise. Unfortunately it seemed impossible at the time to accept the tempting suggestion. But suddenly a way was unexpectedly opened through the splendid offer of the European Fellowship awarded in 1893 by the Association of Collegiate Alumnae for study in foreign universities. Thus in a short space of time and in a most extraordinary manner the realization of the dream to work in the promised halls of Strassburg University became a reality.

At the time the European Fellowship was awarded, it was not known to my professors nor to me that universities in Germany were not coeducational institutions, and that women had never studied in the University of Strassburg; in fact, that they had not been permitted to matriculate in any German university. Therefore we on this side did not appreciate the full significance and importance of the departure, when Professor Goette, director of the Zoology Department in the University of Strassburg, graciously invited a woman student of Bryn Mawr College to work in his department.

It was not until I had worked many days in the splendid laboratory assigned to my private use that it dawned upon me that I was occupying a unique position, and that I was regarded by the students, faculty members, and their wives as a curiosity. In the university circle the news quickly spread that an American "woman's rights" freak, a blue stocking and what not, had had the boldness and audacity to force entrance into the college halls. At Kaffee Klatschen she was served for gossip and dissection. It was not unusual for a professor, student, or diener, seemingly by mistake, to open the laboratory door, look frightened, and quickly retreat. Or students would congregate at the windows of the botanical building opposite the laboratory, and from sheer curiosity stare across at my windows, greatly to the annoyance of the professors in both buildings.

My hostess, the wife of a professor of
mathematics, occasionally invited me to accompany her to social affairs. At a dinner that we attended I met the charming wife of Professor Goltz, one of the most distinguished physiologists in Europe. Frau Professor Goltz was deeply interested in learning of the great independence enjoyed by women and women students in America. In the course of the conversation I remarked that I had specialized in physiology and had been assistant to and conducted investigations under Dr. Jacques Loeb, one of Professor Goltz’s former assistants, from whom I had a letter of introduction to her husband. I ventured to inquire whether she thought Professor Goltz would allow me to work in his department. My heart sank when she replied that her husband was bitterly opposed to the admission of women to the Physiological Institute, the more so because it belonged to the Medical School, where women were taboo. However, she arranged for a meeting in her home, when the letter of introduction might be presented.

At the appointed time I found myself in the library of Professor Goltz’s home, waiting for the eminent professor with little hope of success. Soon he appeared, followed by a fierce looking bulldog that greeted me with growls and terrifying barks. The stern, dignified professor attempted to calm the beast, and with strained gestures of welcome motioned me to a chair. He read the letter, apologized for the animal’s behavior by informing me that the dog disliked women, and regretted that in spite of his high esteem for Dr. Loeb and the recommendations he could not admit me to the Physiology Department because the medical students would resent the presence of women there. However, he would be pleased on Sunday afternoon, following the dinner to which his wife had invited me, to show me the results of some experiments that his associate and he had recently conducted.

I reported the discouraging interview to Goette and to my host and hostess, who promised to speak in my behalf to Professor Goltz and to his associate, Professor Richard Ewald. The latter and his wife were also guests at the Sunday dinner, and accompanied us to the Physiological Institute.

When I saw the well equipped laboratories, museums, demonstration and preparation rooms, and remarkable experiments that had gained international renown, my interest and enthusiasm were deeply aroused. As we were leaving the building, I told Professor Ewald it was unfortunate that I was not a man with the privilege of working in his department. He assured me that there would be no objection to my watching experiments conducted in his private laboratory.

The following day, to my great delight, he invited me to witness the delicate technique required in experiments on the inner ear. Several times thereafter one or two of his research students and I were visitors at his demonstrations. I took pains to make a thorough study of the anatomy and technique involved, and to my surprise was rewarded by an invitation from Professor Ewald to cooperate in an investigation of the brain’s relation to the peripheral center of sound — a study which was later published over our joint signatures.

Needless to say, I was overjoyed at the prospect of working in a physiological research laboratory where opportunity was offered to acquire valuable technique and experience in unusual operations. Now my time was divided between work in the zoological and physiological laboratories. Professor Goette was satisfied with the results obtained on the problem in which he was interested, and to my great surprise offered to accept my investigation for a doctor’s thesis. Furthermore, he advised me to petition the Ministerium of Education in the Reichstag to permit the faculty of the University of
Strassburg to allow me to work for the doctorate. It was necessary to obtain the consent of that august body and the approval of the faculty, because the constitution of the university did not contain a clause permitting women to take the examination for the advanced degree.

Before petitioning the Reichstag, however, it was deemed advisable to ascertain the attitude of the Strassburg faculty regarding the question of giving women the privilege of taking the examination. My petition, accompanied by many influential credentials, was presented for faculty action at the November meeting. It aroused heated discussion, and Professor Graf Solms, the director of the Botanical Department, announced that as chairman of the examining commission he refused to allow a woman to take the examination.

Believing that the disagreement aroused in the faculty by Graf Solms's attitude might prejudice the cause of woman students in Germany, I hastened to beg that my petition be withdrawn. This step, it proved, gained friends and no enemies for the cause.

When an American friend, engaged in publishing her late husband's manuscripts with the help of Professor Rosenbusch, the noted geologist in the University of Heidelberg, heard of Graf Solms's action, she urged me to try to obtain the degree in Heidelberg. But first I wished assurance that the university would actually grant me the degree. Accordingly a formal request was dispatched in November 1893 to the Reichstag's Ministerium of Education, 'that universities in Germany permit women students, prepared in collegiate required subjects as thoroughly as were men, to matriculate, take the examination, and if successful in passing it, to receive the doctor's degree.' It is noteworthy that this petition to the Reichstag pertained not only to my cause but to that of women in general. With this carefully prepared document were enclosed many credentials from noted educators and scientists.

After several weeks of waiting, a formidable-looking document from the Reichstag Ministerium arrived. It informed me that the petition had been presented to the High Commissioner of Education, and its object duly incorporated in the minutes of the day's proceedings. Furthermore, it advised that, inasmuch as I was hoping to enter the Heidelberg University, my petition should be sent to the Ministerium of Education and Justice in the Duchy of Baden, under whose jurisdiction the University of Heidelberg was governed. Also, my petition must receive the approval of the Grand Duke of Baden, who was rector of the university.

In considering the situation, it seemed best to finish the zoological and physiological investigations, and prepare them for publication before leaving Strassburg. In the meantime I addressed a letter to Professor Geheimrath Stengel, Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Heidelberg, asking if the university would give me the degree of Ph.D. provided I presented a satisfactory thesis, pursued the required subjects in the university for the length of time deemed necessary, and passed the examination for the degree. This letter marked the beginning of correspondence that extended over a period of two years. The story may be briefly told here.

A most interesting letter, dated December 9, 1893, was received from Dean Stengel. He informed me that up to date no woman had petitioned the Natural Sciences and Mathematics Faculty for permission to matriculate and to take the examination for the doctorate. Furthermore, that there was in existence no record or constitutional clause stating that women shall or shall not be allowed to prepare for and take the examination. However, to obtain an official decision, a
special printed blank, petitioning for the privilege of taking the test, must be executed and presented for faculty action.

It was so very important that this petition should receive a favorable vote from the faculty that I decided to go to Heidelberg to obtain an audience with the professors under whom I wished to study, and if possible secure their support. Therefore I wrote Professor Butschli (Hofrath Geheimrat Professor Doctor Orto Butschli), the renowned scientist and director of the Zoological Institute of the university, and begged for an interview during the Christmas vacation. This favor he kindly granted.

Arriving at the appointed hour, armed with my thesis, drawings, preparation slides, and letters, I was shown by the dimer to the professor's private laboratory. We found him bending over a microscope, absorbed in studying an object under it. With many apologies the dimer announced a woman wished to speak to him, and inquired if she should be admitted. Turning his heavily bewhiskered face, and scanning me with searching eyes, he ejaculated "Ja wobl. What can I do for you?" Apologizing for the interruption and thanking him for the granted interview, I gave him Professor Goette’s letter of introduction. Then I inquired if he would kindly examine the manuscript and illustrations, and let me know if I might work in his department toward a Ph.D. He asked me to leave my papers, saying that I might expect word from him in a few days.

Upon Professor Butschli’s decision now depended my hope of entering the university. When on December 27 the dimer brought my manuscript and letter, I opened the message with trembling fingers. Imagine my surprise and delight! Not only would he recommend the thesis for the degree, but he was also willing to enroll me with student’s privileges in his department.

With such a delightful prospect, I dispatched the official petition blank to the Dean on January 11, 1894, to be presented to the faculty. Accompanying the petition were all of my letters and credentials and a personal letter in which I begged to be informed whether there existed any faculty ruling against admitting women to the examination for the doctor’s degree.

A special meeting of the faculty was called to consider the petition. All members were present and took active part in the prolonged discussion. It was recognized that the questions asked in Miss Hyde’s petition were for the first time in the history of the university presented for definite official action. After much discussion, two motions were voted:

(1) Women are admitted to the examination for the degree, under the same conditions outlined in the official regulations for men candidates, with the proviso that women are required to study in the University of Heidelberg in preparation for the examination. (2) A faculty rule does not exist against admitting women candidates to the examination for the doctor’s degree.

Professor Quincke, professor of physics, cast the only vote against this motion. Further discussion finally influenced him to join the majority, making the vote unanimous.

The meeting also voted to petition the Senate to present the voted resolutions to the legislative and executive bodies for approval. On February 26 the Dean was notified that the resolutions adopted by the faculty were approved both by the Legislative Ministry and the Senate, with the proviso that in granting this petition it was understood that a precedent was not established justifying women in demanding admission to the university, since it had not as yet in any wise been decreed or announced by the superior Ducal Commission that women should be admitted to Baden’s university on equal terms with men.

Shortly thereafter a letter bearing the seal of royalty reached me. From it I
learned that my petition and letters, through the general adjutant to his Highness, the Grand Duke of Baden, had received due consideration and favorable judgment.

It may be imagined with what profound gratitude and appreciation I received these tidings. They established for the first time in the history of this institution the significant and victorious outcome of the struggle to gain recognition for women candidates for the Ph.D. degree. As a consequence, women thereafter met few obstacles in entering any — except the medical — department in the University of Heidelberg.

Although equal opportunities with men students were not obtained, nevertheless a beginning was made toward that end. With the passage of the decree any woman prepared to fulfill the university's requirements was permitted to study for the finals, and if successful obtain the doctor's degree.

In Strassburg, in the meantime, my physiological and zoological investigations were completed. On my arrival at Heidelberg much time was consumed in fulfilling the customary registration regulations, and in obeying the rules of etiquette. In accordance with the latter, I made a formal call on the Dean and asked for an opportunity to consult him on the subjects chosen for the finals. During the interview, granted late in March, he advised me to see the professors under whom I wished to study, obtain their consent to admit me to their departments and, when the time arrived, to conduct the examination. Furthermore, when all that had been attended to, I was to petition the faculty to approve the choice of subjects chosen, and beg it to invite the professors to be present at the examination.

The first steps taken in following the Dean's advice were to call on Professor Butschli, Director of the Comparative Anatomy and Zoology Departments, and Professor Victor Meyer, Director of the Chemistry Department. Both courteously welcomed me to their departments. However, they suggested taking some subject other than physiology, which I had chosen for the third subject required, since physiology was given in the Medical School, where women would not be admitted. Indeed, Geheimrat Kühne, professor of physiology, had recently announced in a public lecture that women's place was in the home and not in the university. They advised securing an interview with him at once, since the presemester faculty meeting, to which my petition must be submitted for approval, was scheduled for the following day.

Without further delay I called on Professor Kühne and presented a letter of introduction from his friend and colleague, Professor Goltz of Strassburg. He seemed a giant, seated in a huge armchair at a table in a spacious library. Without rising he expressed pleasure in receiving the letter and meeting me. When I told him that I was greatly interested in physiology, he kindly offered the use of his library, and asked what books he might send to my address. He expressed approval in the choice of books.

I then told him that I expected to work in the departments of Professor Butschli and Meyer, and wished to know if, after physiology had been sufficiently mastered, he would examine me in that subject for the degree. He appeared to regard the question as a joke, and laughingly said, "Certainly, if that time should ever come!" As he rose to show me out, he casually remarked that his conference hours were Saturday morning in his laboratory, where the books might be returned and where he would be pleased to discuss them with me.

I hastened to tell Professor Meyer the result of the interview. He expressed great surprise, and assured me that since Professor Kühne had given his promise, he was obliged to fulfill it. He also aided me in preparing the petition that was to
be presented the following day for faculty action.

It was uncertain what attitude the members of the council would assume to the proposal to allow a subject belonging to the Medical School to be credited by the natural sciences and mathematics section as one of the three required subjects for the Ph.D. However, Professor Meyer reported after the meeting that finally a favorable decision had been reached.

But at the council meeting Professor Kühne had announced that he must be excused from giving the examination, and furthermore that he refused to let "skirts" enter his lecture room or laboratory. When questioned whether he had not promised to conduct the examination, if I should ever be prepared for it, he had admitted making that statement, in reply to what he considered a joke. He had had no idea that he was being made the victim of an American scheme in order to secure his favorable answer. To the statement that there was no proof that unfair methods had been employed or that the question had been put as a joke, he had replied that since it appeared that he ought to adhere to his promise, "as a gentleman he would keep his word." But without admission to the lecture room or laboratory, how could one master the subject sufficiently to pass the finals?

Even with this disappointment, the decision of the faculty meeting was more than I had expected. Was there not sufficient cause for rejoicing in the knowledge that a long stretch of the difficult pioneer route on the higher education of women had been traversed? The taboo chasm of tradition and prejudice that defied the aspirations and attempts of earnest women to reach the mecca of intellectual freedom had been bridged and actually crossed to the sacred road beyond leading to the open door of the seat of learning.

At an early hour of a spring morning in 1894, I entered the new Zoological Institute of the University of Heidelberg, selected a back seat in the lecture room, and was assigned to a well equipped laboratory. Over the table I hung a picture of the Grand Duke of Baden, writing below it "Dankbarkeit erzeugt Ehrfurcht und Gehorsamkeit," — an answer to the fear expressed by the Duke, that "if women became better educated, they would no longer respect, honor, and obey men, as they should." (The picture still hung there when I visited the laboratory thirty years later.)

In the Chemistry Department I was greeted by Professor Meyer, who placed my name on one of the most desirable places, where the experiments and demonstrations could most readily be observed. Seemingly all was going well. But how to approach Kühne without making an irrevocable mistake was a question that constantly haunted me. What if he should refuse to admit me to the lectures and laboratory courses in physiology? How would it be possible without attending them to prepare for the finals?

It is true, botany could be chosen as a third subject, and much heartache avoided. But I preferred physiology above every other subject, and had determined to specialize in it. To abandon that decision forever seemed to me a calamity. There was but one thing to do: study the books that Kühne had loaned me, and take them to the laboratory where on Saturday morning he held his seminar.

When the dienner heard my request, he grinned most politely and led the way to the conference room. That gave me courage. Professor Kühne greeted me with extreme politeness. That greatly disturbed me. He questioned me on subjects of investigations that had recently appeared in foreign publications, and on every subject except those dealt with in the books. Being unprepared for the attacks he successfully made to dishearten me, I ventured to ask the loan of literature about which he had quizzed me, and
told him I regretted that the topics treated in the books had not been discussed. Thereupon he politely assured me that the examination might also deal with questions with which I was unprepared, and that as a matter of fact only a small per cent of the men students successfully passed the examination in physiology. Finally he advised registering in botany.

I replied that physiology interested me more than any other subject and if necessary I would devote a year or more in further study to master it, and asked if it were not possible to accomplish this with the aid of his assistants. He laughingly replied that his assistants had never attended his lectures; therefore it was doubtful they would be able to help me. He offered me a treatise on the physiology of blood, with the remark he would be interested in discussing the subject matter with me any Saturday morning.

During the ensuing weeks most of my thoughts were stained in blood. But when I came to the conference and begged to report on the topics dealt with in the books, Kühne, seemingly annoyed, inquired if I had heard that the professor of botany would admit me to his department. I replied that I had come to Heidelberg to study physiology and had just received word that the Phoebe Hearst fellowship for study abroad had been awarded me. I therefore felt in duty bound to make a success of my work in the university, and hoped he would assist me to that end.

I was dumbfounded when he rose, opened the door to the general laboratory, and beckoned to his assistants. He introduced me with the remark that I was determined to study physiology, and since he refused to let me attend his lectures, perhaps they would undertake to help me attain my object. They said that with his consent they were willing to try.

On the following morning, the medical students who crowded the physiology lecture room wondered why the two chief assistants were occupying the front seats. This was the first time in the history of his instruction that Kühne was honored by the presence of his associates in the lecture room. To his amazement and satisfaction they were actually taking notes.

The notes were taken for me, to be copied for study in preparation for the finals. Six hours daily were devoted to the subject. In the opinion of the instructors, this schedule followed for at most six semesters should prepare me for the most rigid examination.

During these months of arduous work, the thought haunted me that Kühne would do all in his power to frustrate my purpose. He bitterly resented the gossip aroused among his colleagues by the stand his assistants had taken, and he resented being an unwilling agent in permitting "skirts" to enter the Medical School.

Finally the morning of the first lecture in chemistry arrived. On reaching the building, I was dismayed to hear an uproar within, and awakened to the realization that I was late. The door of the lecture room was closed. As I stood before it, the chills ran up and down me, and my courage failed. It was impossible for me to face the excited crowd of noisy students. Turning to leave as quickly as possible, I saw students rushing upstairs. I realized that if I failed then it would require more courage to enter the classroom the next day. The students jostled each other and hastened by, leaving me standing in the open doorway.

A silence followed, so profound you could hear a pin drop. The men stood seemingly transfixed in their various attitudes. I never knew how I got to my seat. The blood was rushing to my head, and in the hush I distinctly heard an American voice say, "We shall next have them in the jury box."

To hear those taunting words in my profound embarrassment from an Ameri-
ican would have proved too disheartening if the remark had not been instantly censured with hisses and scraping of feet by the German students who heard it. And to the credit of the Heidelberg students it must be said that in all the time of my attendance at the university, they always treated me with the greatest courtesy.

For three semesters I attended the lectures and demonstrations in chemistry conscientiously. At the beginning of the second semester I no longer was the only woman student in chemistry. Encouraged by my report of the opportunities offered in chemistry and geology for advanced work, two of my Bryn Mawr College friends had come to Heidelberg for special studies.

The time spent in the Zoological Institute was most happily employed in research, attending lectures, demonstrations, and seminars. I shall forever cherish the memories of my sojourn there, as among the most delightful of my college days.

As a matriculated student at the University of Heidelberg I devoted two years in preparation for the doctorate toward which my researches and thesis had already been accepted and credited in the Natural Sciences and Mathematics Faculty. While working here it was gratifying to meet women graduates from Russia and America, who were now admitted under the finally established resolutions not only to the lectures but also to the laboratories.

Finally the last lecture and laboratory experiment came to an end. I began a review of the subjects, especially of physiology, the one that caused most worry, in preparation for the finals.

In accordance with university traditions, a visit to the Dean was in order for the purpose of asking him to present my request to the faculty to be permitted to take the examination, if possible in November. The faculty's favorable decision was sent to Kühne for concurrence. In reply he announced that owing to ill health he was leaving for Italy for an indefinite period.

This information was disheartening, not only because preparation for the tests was under way but also on account of the uncertainty of his return. Early in December Kühne appeared in Heidelberg. Again a formal visit to the Dean was necessary, and another petition was sent to the examining board asking at what date permission would be given to appear for the finals. The date was set for January 8, and Kühne was invited to conduct the test in physiology. He replied that the date was noted, and that he would be present.

While the process of cramming was going on, the weather became severely cold and damp. The change in temperature and lack of proper food and exercise no doubt contributed to a severe attack of neuralgia, and it was necessary to petition the Board to postpone the examination. This time it was set for 6 p.m. February 12, 1896.

At last the day arrived when in formal attire, according to custom, it behoved me to call upon and invite the professors to the examination. The invitation was graciously accepted, but Kühne said only that he hoped to be present. This implied uncertainty was very trying.

The morning of the momentous day found me in a wretched condition, unable to think or act. My loyal friend was deeply distressed. She feared that at the last moment my cherished hope was doomed to disappointment. It was late in the afternoon before I found it possible to take nourishment. By five o'clock we realized that I must either be in the university hall or dispatch word to the examining board that I was too ill to appear.

Suddenly an unaccountable consciousness of awakened power possessed me. Telling my friend that my indisposition had miraculously vanished, with her as-
sistance I dressed and set out on foot to the university. The invigorating evening air and knowledge of recovered well-being imbued me with a spirit of confidence that stood me in good stead.

The pedell in his elaborate uniform stood at the door. In a condescending tone he requested me to wait in the anteroom until he should be notified to conduct me into the hall. He stood erect holding his mace, it seemed to me an eternity, guarding the door, when he ventured to say, "Geheimrath Kühne has not yet arrived." Suddenly the room was pervaded by an overwhelming chilliness. But presently the door was opened, and I was escorted to a chair at a long table surrounded by what appeared to me to be countless professors.

As I entered the room, wine glasses were being passed, and Kühne rose and handed one to me saying, "We shall celebrate this event with a toast in champagne." In thanking him I humbly asked permission to drink water before and champagne to the toast after the examination. Laughingly they rose, and as the diner handed me the water, all drank to my success.

Professor Butschli placed his watch on the table, and Kühne, as Dean of the Medical Faculty, had the honor of opening the quiz. He was keen in his questioning, and made no comments upon my answers. Suddenly Butschli pointed to the watch and inquired if he was aware that the allotted time had elapsed? Jocularly Kühne replied that in the enjoyment of the test he had entirely forgotten the time.

The examination lasted until ten o'clock, when the pedell entered, showed me to the anteroom, and asked me to wait until the professors had left the hall. While adjusting my wraps, I heard discordant voices issuing from the hall, and feared the worst. When the pedell opened the door, some of the members, among them Butschli and lastly Kühne, came toward me, extending their congratulations. The ordeal was over!

My friend was awaiting me in a cab at the entrance to the building. She kindly inquired if she might have my professors taken to their homes. Butschli accepted the offer, saying his wife was anxious to hear the result of the game, and to see me in the gown which she had heard I had made for the occasion.

The Frau Professor seemed so very pleased that I had come. Excitedly she asked her husband how Kühne had behaved. He answered that I had deserved Summa Cum Laude, but that the "brute" had objected to giving a woman that honor. Finally a compromise had been agreed upon, and a new term, Multa Cum Laude Superavit, with the title, Doctor of Philosophy and the Natural Sciences, was conferred upon me. Before I left, Frau Professor Butschli invited me to a dinner in my honor.

On the following day a great honor, an invitation to a dinner from Frau and Professor Kühne, was received. Most unfortunately, this was for the day set for the dinner of Frau and Professor Butschli, and could not be accepted. An invitation from the students, asking me to participate in a parade, was also declined. However, an enormous chocolate cake in the shape of a doctor’s chapeau sent with congratulations was accepted most heartily.

I was the first woman to obtain the Ph.D. of Heidelberg not as a courtesy but as a bona fide university student in the Natural Sciences and Mathematics Faculty who had met in every detail the requirements of that institution’s decree of March 7, 1894. The university, be it said to her honor, had established a precedent of far-reaching importance.

At this time two most astonishing letters reached me. The first stated that now, since I was a graduate of the university, the use of the Physiology Department was cordially placed at my disposal and Professor Kühne and his associates would be pleased to welcome me there. Shortly thereafter, the invitation was accepted,
and Kühne's dictum that "skirts should never enter his laboratory" had lost its significance. For the first time, a woman had been invited to do research in the Medical School of the University of Heidelberg. It was a pleasure to work in the research room with other investigators, to discuss experimental methods, and get new ideas on problems in physiology.

The second letter was an imposing official document informing me that the university contributed a sum equal to five hundred dollars to the Naples Marine Biological Laboratory in support of a research table allotted each year to an honor student, and that for the ensuing year, on the recommendation of Professor Kühne and the Naples Table Committee, the use of this research laboratory had been awarded to me.

This incomprehensible information dazed me beyond words. Never before had a German university allotted its Naples Table to a woman. It seemed as though Professor Kühne was endeavoring to make amends for his harsh treatment.

Through the courtesy and splendid scientific and executive efficiency of Dr. Anton Dohrn, the director, his associates and famous general staff, an international laboratory of far-reaching scientific and educational benefits had been established on the bay of Naples. I was overjoyed at the prospect of working there.

In the spring of 1896 I began work in this largest and most important laboratory in the world. On the heights above the Station, Mount Vesuvius smoked, across the blue bay Capri smiled, in the adjoining city park the orchestra played gay tunes, and involuntarily the thought arose, "This is in truth a haven of bliss!"

What a rare privilege it was to pursue studies in this highly endowed station! Through the investigators who came here from all quarters of the globe it offered a center for interchange that led to international understanding and enduring friendships. At the end of three months the problem, "Physiology of Salivary Glands, Especially in Octopus," was finished under the direction of the gifted scientist, Dr. Schönlein.

Grateful for the generous spirit that pervaded all departments of the Station and the valuable benefits offered to men and women alike, I resolved upon returning to the United States to do all in my power to enable eligible women scientists to avail themselves of the laboratory's unexcelled opportunities.

When the results of the investigation on the salivary glands were sent to Professor Kühne, he acknowledged the report with an invitation that he had obtained for me from his colleague, Professor Kronecker, Director of the Physiology Department in the University of Bern. So I postponed my homeward journey until September, in order to accept Professor Kronecker's kind and tempting offer to be his guest in the institution and do some research that interested him.

The work in Bern under the genial director proved most interesting, and it is with deep appreciation and gratitude that I acknowledge my indebtedness for valuable assistance and suggestions.

Among the many visitors that I met in the laboratory was Professor Henry P. Bowditch, the distinguished physiologist of the Harvard Medical School. The problem I was working on, "Influence of Temperature on Muscle Activity," interested Professor Bowditch, and before he left Bern he kindly gave me a letter of introduction to his associate, Dr. William Townsend Porter, telling me that if Heidelberg and Bern opened their doors to women, there was no reason why Harvard Medical School should not admit them also.

There were good reasons for hastening to return to the United States. One very substantial one was that my funds were exhausted; another, that work must be done in the Harvard Medical School while there was a chance to enter.
I reached Cambridge in the autumn of 1896, and obtained part-time appointments to teach biology in three preparatory schools. In the afternoons I studied in the Harvard Zoology Department "The Nerve Distribution in the Eyes of Mollusca."

Later in the season I took Dr. Bowditch's letter of introduction to Dr. Porter, who kindly encouraged me to begin an investigation in the Physiology Department of the Medical School on the "Effects of Distention of the Ventricle on Blood Flow through the Heart."¹ Under his masterly guidance, the research was completed and published in 1898 in the American Journal of Physiology. It was read before the American Physiological Society, in which association I had later the honor of being elected a member — one of the first, if not the first, woman to be chosen.

In the midst of my research I had not forgotten my purpose, to provide the opportunity for American women to work at the Zoological Station where I had been so generously welcomed. At a dinner in Cambridge to a group of influential women, mostly educators, I suggested that an organization be created to support a table for American women at the station. The idea met with unanimous approval, and as temporary secretary, my wholehearted energy was put in the task of arousing interest and support for the organization among educational institutions and scientific societies in this country.

¹ This was the first time, as far as I have been able to learn, that a woman carried on research in the Harvard Medical School.

The organization was eventually enlarged and given the title, "The Naples Table Association for Promoting Research by Women." Among the founders were President M. Carey Thomas, Professor Ellen Richards, Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer, President Irvine, Dean Agnes Irwin, Miss Agnes Longfellow, Miss Florence Cushing, Miss Gill, Mrs. Elizabeth Clarke, and myself. It was composed of thirteen colleges, two associations, and five individual contributors, each contributing fifty dollars annually. It later also offered research prizes of one thousand and then two thousand dollars, to encourage women in individual research.

Reviewing all these developments, is it too far-fetched to accord Professor Kühne the credit for the rare opportunities given me — to work in the Naples Station, in the University of Bern, and the Physiology Department of the Harvard Medical School? If not, then "All is well that ends well."

But not without credit given to the American Association of University Women. To the Association belongs the honor and any success that has been achieved, through its establishment of women's fellowships. Without the opportunities given me, through the Association's fellowship, and the Phoebe Hearst award, with which the Association was also concerned, I should not have been able to contribute my share, although a small one, to securing for women the privileges of university education enjoyed by men.