

## A Great Standard Bearer in the Education of Women

This woman is Dr. Patrick who founded the American College for Girls. On the 18th of March the College celebrates the one hundredth anniversary of her birth. Because of my devotion and deep gratitude to this great teacher, and because of my close friendship with her, I was asked to represent the older Alumnae and speak on Charter Day. ( I preferred, however, to pay my tribute in the columns of the "Akşam". )

When the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy was conferred on Dr. Patrick by Columbia University, she was cited as one "who did a man's work with a woman's skill and a woman's devotion."

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These words give a true picture of Dr. Patrick, because without losing any of the special traits of a woman and never striving to imitate men, calmly yet with power she founded a great educational institution. Among the students who received their education in that institution are women of distinction in the Near East. Here also, among the Turkish graduates of the College we have those whose achievements in various fields of knowledge are largely due to their training in the institution Dr. Patrick created. A recent striking example is Prof. Fâzıla Şevket who won the İnönü Award because of a discovery she made in the field of Biology.

Mary Mills Patrick came from a family that emigrated from Ireland to America. After completing her University education in America she sailed to the Orient and had her first teaching experience at Erzurum. She specialized in Philosophy, a subject in which in later years she published various books. In Erzurum, however, she was naturally a teacher of English. While still very young, she came to Istanbul, and when she became the President of the College she taught only Philosophy. After spending half a century or so in Turkey, and returning to America, she published "Under Five Sultans", an account of her life in Turkey that was largely an autobiography. She was President of the College for a short time in the early days of the Turkish Republic, and in writing of that period she said,

"The educational system of the Turks is not very different from our own, and their educational level has risen. Men and women now study together in the various departments of the University".

As an old pupil and also a friend, I know that in saying this Dr. Patrick felt a deep satisfaction. Throughout all the long years of her life she had dedicated herself to the cause of securing recognition of woman's value and ability, and to prove that in the field of service to humanity they were man's full equals.

Before Dr. Patrick came, the College existed in Üsküdar as the American School for Girls. After she became President, however, the grade of instruction was raised, and in 1890, largely due to Dr. Patrick's efforts, the institution was granted a Charter as a College. This is the origin of Charter Day celebrated every year on the anniversary of the granting of the charter. Dr. Patrick considered this the most important day in the year and invited as speakers distinguished American scholars. In fact, not only from America, but from the whole world she drew speakers of international reputation. Often these eminent men stayed several days at the College, and during that time gave a series of lectures on their fields of specialization. Therefore, the College at such times became a veritable Republic of Learning.

During the years of her presidency, Dr. Patrick was absent on leave, studying in the Universities of Zurich, Leipzig and Berne, finally receiving the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. She also received honorary degrees from several American Universities.

In 1905, after a disastrous fire destroyed the newest building at Üsküdar, Dr. Patrick went to America to raise money for new buildings on the European side. Her heroic efforts finally met with success and in 1914 the College moved to its present site at Arnavutköy. During the years of this great activity, she found time to take part in philosophical and

Psychological Congresses in Paris, Munich, Bologna, and at Harvard University. She also published two philosophical books, "Sextus Empiricus and Greek Skepticism", and "Sappho and the Island of Lesbos". In 1924 Dr. Patrick retired and returned to America with the title of "President Emerita".

I do not know how my father came to hear of Dr. Patrick and the College. But from the time that I was very young he wished me to go there, and several times inquired if I could be received as a special student. When he learned that the College did not receive any students who were younger than 11, he was forced to possess his soul in patience for two years. Then, when I reached the age of eleven, I was received as a day student, living with my grandmother in a house in the İdjadiye quarter of Üsküdar. I was enrolled at the College in spite of the opposition of Abdul Hamid to foreign schools. It was during the interview my father had with Dr. Patrick at that time that I first saw Dr. Patrick. My one strong memory of that interview was my shyness in the presence of Dr. Patrick; but afterward I remembered the beautiful Turkish with the idiom of the Eastern vilayets which she spoke. It was the kind of Turkish I had heard at home from the time I first began to speak. It sounded so familiar to me that had I not been awed by her strong personality, I would have thrown my arms around her.

During this first year at College I felt very much of a stranger, first because there was no one my age; secondly because it seemed that students came from all over the world, at least from all countries of the Near East, and spoke many different languages. In a way, it was almost a miniature intellectual United Nations. I don't remember her name, but I always think with gratitude of the Armenian girl who took care of me just as though she had been my big older sister. Had it not been for her, I fear I might almost have been tempted to run away from school. Due to this contact, I even learned to speak fairly fluent Armenian.

At this period we saw very little of Dr. Patrick, but when she passed through the corridors even among the most unruly students a feeling

of veneration arose and a kind of awed silence descended.

After one year, on the secret report of a student, this period ended, and an imperial order forced me to leave the school. However, I carried on my education at home with English and Turkish teachers, and finally I was able to return to the higher College classes as a boarder; and after three years I graduated. It was during those years that my real contacts with Dr. Patrick began.

Both as an administrator and as a teacher, Dr. Patrick had no favorites among either the teachers or the students. Although many of the teachers had special friends, even favorites among the students, Dr. Patrick was always impersonal and objective holding herself somewhat aloof. During those years, whether the field was literature, science, or history, teachers were outstanding and of an ability not easily secured. In fact, even in a University it is not easy to find so outstanding a group. I am sure that Dr. Patrick was largely responsible for this unusual group of teachers.

She, herself, taught Philosophy. Whether it was a topic in Philosophy or passages which, as the only student in the class, I chose from History, I know that I found in them my greatest enjoyment, and that I pondered most over them as I read them. Particularly because of her clarity and simplicity, Dr. Patrick was an outstanding teacher. In her classes there was always the greatest freedom for exchange of ideas and discussion. Dr. Patrick, both as concerned ideals, and in regard to the high quality of instruction, was an exceptional teacher and director. I shall never forget something that happened at a private social gathering. Everyone was supposed to make a speech, sing a song, or tell a joke. Someone asked Dr. Patrick for a song. At first she hesitated. It seemed almost like asking the Sphinx to sing. After a moment's pause she seated herself, and with her two hands resting on her two knees, just like an Erzincanlı she began to sing -

"Erzincanda bir kuş var,  
Kanadında gümüş var"

and continued this sad, eastern folk song from end to end with all seriousness and attention, just as though she were giving a lecture on Kant.

The last time I saw her was when I was a visiting lecturer at Columbia University. She lived in a hotel very near the University. I saw her frequently, and we had long talks, that made us come to know and understand each other as never before. Today I know that when Dr. Patrick said "woman" she was thinking of womanhood the world over. She lived to be 90, but at the time when she was talking about making a visit to Turkey, she passed on.

Today, I salute her with gratitude and affection as a great person, and a great teacher. And I know that all her students join me in honoring her memory.

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**Scott Ailesi Koleksiyonu**



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