

# TO A LITERARY ASPIRANT

BY ROBERT LOVEMAN

RATHER let thou the snowy page  
A virgin's death endure  
Than it should live a shamed age,  
Wed to a thought impure.



BY ALICE GRAHAM MCCOLLIN



IT is interesting to know that the girl who posed as the model for the Goddess of Liberty which is familiar to the sight of this nation from its position on the face of the many silver dollars of the land, should have been born in the City of Brotherly Love, the "Cradle of American Independence." It is not only an interesting, but a fitting historical coincidence that this should be so.

Anna Willess Williams, the original of this pictured goddess, was born in Philadelphia during the Civil War. Her mother was of



MISS WILLIAMS

southern birth, the daughter of Dr. Arthur H. Willess, a wealthy slave owner of Maryland, who, while his daughter was still unmarried, suffered financial reverses. When nineteen she married Henry Williams, of Philadelphia, and removed with him to his native city. Mr. Williams soon became affluent but through some mismanagement he lost all his property, and his daughter, Anna, the youngest of nine children, was born under most adverse circumstances. While she was still but a child her father died, leaving his widow, although in delicate health, with the strongest determination to care for and educate her children, and it was entirely through the endeavors of her mother that Miss Williams received her education.

Early in 1876 the Treasury Department secured the services of Mr. George Morgan, an expert designer and engraver, who had previously been connected with the Royal Mint of England. He was assigned to duty at the Philadelphia Mint upon the design for the new silver dollar which was soon to be issued. He gave his attention first to the reverse side, for which a design of the American eagle was afterward selected, hoping that a suitable idea would occur to him for the head of the Goddess of Liberty, which, it seemed proper, should be used as the principal figure on the coin. After considerable delay and frequent change of plan, it was decided that, if possible, the head should be a representation of some living American girl. In the pursuit of his duties Mr. Morgan had been thrown into the society of Mr. Thomas Eakins, an artist of considerable reputation, and the similarity of their interests became the foundation of a warm friendship between them. It was through Mr. Eakins' influence that Miss Williams, a friend of his family, was induced to pose for Mr. Morgan for the designs of the Goddess of Liberty. The sittings took place at the residence of Mr. Eakins, on Mount Vernon Street, below Eighteenth, in November, 1876. It was some time before the cap, with its sheath, was decided upon as the ornamentation for the head.

For nearly two years after the issue of the Bland dollar, the model's identity was kept a secret. In the summer of 1879, however, an indefatigable newspaper man discovered and proclaimed Miss Williams' connection with the coin. Since that time the annoyance to which she has been subjected has been constant. Letters, visitors—both to her home and school—and disagreeable personal encounters have been of almost daily occurrence.

Frequent as the requests for permission to publish a sketch of her life have been, Miss Williams has declined always to permit any such publication until now, and it is the good fortune of THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL to be enabled to present her to its many readers.

Miss Williams has become one of the most successful of the many clever women teachers of this country. She has been especially successful as an instructor of kindergarten training and philosophy. The success she has attained in her chosen vocation has been entirely the result of persevering effort and natural ability. She has been a diligent student always, and an enthusiastic follower of the University Extension Movement. In March, 1891, she received the prize for the best original essay on psychology offered by the University Extension Society.

Miss Williams' literary talents have found expression in interesting contributions to the current periodicals. Her taste in reading is principally for the philosophical treatises. Carlyle is her chosen essayist, and Howells her favorite novelist. The fine arts also claim her appreciation. She is a devout member and regular attendant of the Baptist Church.

In appearance Miss Williams is most attractive. She is below medium height, of graceful figure, with a face worthy the honor bestowed upon it of representing the goddess of her native country. Her complexion is fair, her eyes blue, her nose Grecian, and her hair, which is almost her crowning glory, is golden in color, abundant in quantity and of wonderful lightness of texture, the soft coil in which it is worn being especially becoming. Miss Williams is refined and gracious in her presence and free from self-consciousness. It may be said of her that she combines to a special degree strength of character and purpose with great gentleness and modesty.

The lesson of all lessons to be learned from Miss Williams' life story is that while fame may light upon the young life, adding to its reputation for external qualities, as in this case, the real success, which is hers, comes from personal application and steady perseverance. In these things, as in her beauty, she has proved herself a worthy model.

The history of the silver dollar, however, extends considerably further back than 1879. The first issue of silver dollars from the Government Mint was in 1794. On July 18th of that year the Bank of Maryland deposited some \$80,000 worth of "coins of France" (to be exact \$80,715.73½) with the Government, and on the 15th of October the first issue of 1758 silver dollars was returned by the chief coiner of the Treasury. The design of these first dollars was a head of Liberty facing to the right. Above was the word "Liberty" and beneath the date "1794." To the left were eight stars, and to the right seven, representative of the number of States in the Union. In 1798 it became apparent that it would be quite impossible to add a star for every new State which the future might unite with the nation, and a return to the original thirteen was made, at which the decoration of stars has remained. On the reverse side of the 1794 dollar was an eagle with raised wings encircled by branches of laurel crossed, and around the wreath was the legend, "United States of America."

In 1795 a change was made in the design of the dollar. A bust, instead of the head of Liberty, was used, and the flowing hair from the head was bound with ribbon. The issue of 1796 was of the same design. In 1797 the number of stars was increased to include Tennessee, and there were two issues, some of fifteen and some of sixteen stars, during that year. In 1798, as has been said, the return to the original thirteen stars was made, and at the same time a further change was made in the reverse side; the design was an eagle with raised wings, bearing the United States shield on his breast, and in its beak a scroll inscribed "E Pluribus Unum," a bundle of thirteen arrows in the right talon, and an olive branch in the left; above the eagle were clouds and thirteen stars, and about the whole "United States of America." This design continued in use until 1804, when the coinage of silver dollars was suspended. In that year nearly \$20,000 were issued, of which at the present time but eight examples are known to exist. Coinage of silver dollars was resumed in 1840 with a new design. It was a figure of Liberty seated on a rack, supporting with her right hand the United States shield, across which floated a scroll inscribed "Liberty." On the reverse was an eagle with extended wings. This design was used until 1866, when it was slightly varied by the introduction above the eagle of the inscription, "In God We Trust," and this design was used until 1878, when Miss Williams' profile was substituted.

