





GABINET PORTRAITS



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Summary

The present issue of the anthology "National Heritage" is devoted to Russian women. It opens with a prayer addressed to the Virgin by a famous Russian theologian St. John of Kronschtadt.

The first section centred around such a legendary figure in Russian history as Boyarynya Morozova is dealing with the feats of female love and fidelity. Boyarynya Morozova went on record in 17th-century religious cataclysms in this country as a staunch adherent of old religious norms. Having refused to accept new church rites introduced by reformists in the church she sacrificed her wealth and social status and even tortures could not make that woman betray her ideals. She was imprisoned and died in torture-chamber but preserved her spirit intact. Letters of the schism's leader Archpriest Habakkum addressed to Boyarynya Morozova and a historical essay written by a well-known Russian historian I. Zabelin introduce the readers into those remote pages from national history.

Memoirs of Duchess Natalya Dolgorukaya acquaint the readers with a young girl engaged to a favourite of Tsar Peter.

Eleonora Pavliuchenko is telling in her article contributed to the anthology about untiring efforts of the mother of the Muravyov Brothers, rebellious officers arrested after the failure of the December 1825 uprising and sentenced to long exile, on rendering all possible help to her children and their comrades.

Nun Serafima is writing in the anthology of another Russian martyr, Grand Duchess Yelizaveta Feodorovna, sister of the last Russian Empress, who was barbarously killed, together with her near and dear ones, during Red Bolshevik terror.

The section featuring women at the helm of power offers an essay by A. Nikitin about the first Russian Christian Princess Olga, or a story by Baron N. Vranghel about contradictory temper of Russian Empress Yelizaveta. The section completes with reminiscences of Duchess Yekaterina Dashkova, the first ever President of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The section devoted to women who have inscribed a glorious page in Russian artistic history begins with an article by G. Vekshin showing life and work of famous Russian poetesses from the 19th century, Yevdokia Rostopchina and Karolina Pavlova, while Nadezhda Zarechnaya is telling of a unique voyage-tour around the world done by singer of Imperial Theatre Darya Leonova in the 1870s. Following is an unknown earlier letter written by the great Russian actress Maria Yermolova and telling of Emperor Nicholas II reception.

A separate section deals with famous women patronizing arts in this country, among them Countess Praskovya Uvarova, President of Moscow Archaeological Society, and Princess Maria Tenisheva, a well-known connoisseur.

Tatyana Komarova narrates about the protector and curator of Yasnaya Polyana museum, Countess Sofia Tolstaya, widow of the great writer Leo Tolstoy.

Wives of Russian travellers sharing with their husbands all hardships and dangers of Siberian and Far-Eastern routes in the 19th century were undeservedly wronged then and stayed in historic oblivion. The section "Jules Verne Did Not Know about Them" fills in the gap, presenting excerpts from letters by Katerina Nevelskaya, the wife of the famous Russian Admiral and trailblazer, as well as an article by N. Polunina about Alexandra Potanina, wife and assistant of the noted researcher of Asia N. Potanin.

The next chapter acquaints the readers with women inspiring writers and poets' creativity. Just a few traits from the history of relations between Alexander Pushkin and Anna Kern, a story by Vladimir Novikov about the wife of the great Russian poet Alexei Tolstoy, an essay of Dmitry Dostoyevsky, a great-grandson of the genius of Russian literature Fyodor Dostoyevsky, about Anna Dostoyevskaya, his wife, make the nucleus of the chapter.

Passages from reminiscences and correspondence of women witnessing the apocalyptic events which ran high in Russia in the 19th-early 20th century are published in the section "Time and Destinies". Among other publications are excerpts from diaries by a daughter of court architect Ye. Schtackenschneider, reminiscences of Baroness M. Vranghel, of Z. Manakina, the secretary, in 1917, of Provisional Government Prime-Minister A. Kerensky, citations from A. Efron's letters (daughter of poetess Marina Tsvetayeva).

Russian archives keep large collections of love correspondence from different time. The anthology presents, in its section "Romance in Letters" just a small piece of it, illustrated with letters of Alexander Griboyedov, Vassily Zhukovsky, Grigory Potyomkin, etc.

The issue is completed with a historical essay written by a famous 19th-century researcher M. Semevsky about maid of honour Maria Gamilton executed by order of Emperor Peter the Great.