

which she finally forged her step-daughter's name to meet sufficiently to stop for the time the pressure the store was bringing upon her. Grafting in expense accounts is a common delinquency among women who foreclubs or organizations travel. The use of official cars, official stationery, of all kinds of small things which belong to somebody else and for whose use one has no warrant, is familiar. There is great temptation for the woman of small means who is ambitious to get on in profession, club, organization, politics, to patch out in these mean little ways. Mrs. K, too, like so many of her sisters, was caught in the trap of spending more than she earned. She loved good clothes, justified them if she over-ran her means by saying, and probably believing, that her position required it. It was that specious claim that made her when she reached Albany distinguish herself by her good clothes, take an expensive house, entertain

largely. It was to pay for her clothes, run this house, to travel as she did, that she used census employees for her private service or pleasure, that she forged the names of family and friends, that she showed the ingenuity in small pilfering which only a woman who had accepted the idea of "honest graft" and who found herself in a tight place, could possibly do.

One of the pernicious results of the kind of activity that we see thousands of women engaged in now, that futile activity of flying about from place to place, fostering organizations, from convention to convention, meeting to meeting, persuading themselves that by the number of people they talk with, the lectures they hear, the organizations to which they belong, the conventions to which they go, their public service is measured. Mrs. K, like thousands of others, had come to a point where this being in a small public eye was as necessary to her as the adoration of her sex. She had dreamed of the time when she would

be the center of the stage, when she entered the restaurant where the dignitaries of the convention gathered, people would stop to whisper "There's Mrs. K" - when she was seated women and men would come over and shake her hand, to have a word of talk with her, to whisper in her ear. There had been a day when she was the one who went - now her time had come. All the flub-dubbery accompanying this feverish and futile activity goes into the training of women who are coming into public life. It trapped Mrs. K. *into believing it meant something -*

necessary to And she was trapped, too, by the emphasis which party politics puts on machinery, loyalty to it, working with it. It never applauds individual character, loyalty to the things of the State above its machine. It certainly never did in Onondaga County, and Mrs. K was so faithful a follower of the Onondaga county machine that the gentlemen who make its backbone were glad enough to use her to meet the demands of women that the Republican party recognize them. They abandoned her shamelessly when conviction came. It was not the crime - it was the stupidity of the crime that made them turn their backs, at least publicly, on Mrs. K. They had not realized the limits which they, experienced gentlemen that they are would put on the application of "honest graft" might not naturally be understood by a woman inexperienced in its application. They used "honest graft" under strict limitations which she, poor woman, had not yet grasped.

She was a victim, too, in a sense, of the laxity of the governmental organization which prevailed at the time she was elected. I cannot help believing that if the re-organization of the State government put in force by Gov. Smith, reducing the departments from 180 to 18 and making such offices as that of secretary of state appointive instead of elective and bringing the secretary into the governor's cabinet exactly in the Federal way, if the

regular cabinet meetings had been held at which Gov. Smith requires from each head a full accounting - if this highly efficient organization had been in effect when Florence K came into office, I cannot believe that she would have ever attempted the use of people and public moneys of which she has been proved guilty. She would have gotten in those cabinet meetings that sense of public office as a public trust which has been so strong a feature of Gov. Smith's training of his associates.

Moreover, she was a victim of certain laxities. Mr. LeB. was right when he condemned the organization of the Civil Service Commission which had made it possible for a Chief Clerk to pass over as many examples of misfeasance as the Chief Clerk of the Civil Service Commission did. He was right in condemning the laxity of a bank handling state funds which would repeatedly cash checks which even a careless cashier ought to have recognized as forgeries. There is nothing in this case of Mrs. K to show that she was naturally a criminal. Her ambition, her vanity, the flattery with which she was surrounded, the desire for more and more money, the praise of both women and men with whom she carried on political work - all these things had blunted whatever fine sense of integrity and propriety she may have once had. A woman who had kept the affection of her own family, a step-son and step-daughter included, who was so adored by many fine women, could not have been a naturally dishonest woman. Little by little she had subcombed to the vicious American habit of lopping off a little here, a little there to help out the budget which was always beyond her means. If rumor is true, she did it as the head of the Home Economics department in Syracuse University. If six hams were required for the school, she ordered seven and sent one to her house - such is gossip. Tens of thousands of women the country over are getting this sort of training in home, in their activities, in

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It was right because she did it -
they were supping - see note -