

A Woman of the Century: Fourteen Hundred-Seventy Biographical Sketches Accompanied by Portraits of Leading American Women in all Walks of Life.

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**FOLTZ, Mrs. Clara Shortridge**, orator and lawyer, born in New Lisbon, Henry county, Ind., 16th July, 1849. Her father was the eloquent Christian preacher, Elias W. Shortridge. When seven years old, she removed with her parents to Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, where she attended, at intervals, Howe's Female Seminary for nearly three years. Leaving there she went to Mercer county, Ill., and taught school six months,



CLARA SHORTRIDGE FOLTZ.

completing the term on her birthday. The same year she was married. Household cares occupied her time for several years. In 1872, having removed to the Pacific coast, she began to write for the press and showed flashes of genius as a correspondent. Four years later she began the study of law, supporting herself and five children by her pen and occasional lectures. But women were not then allowed to practice law in the Golden State. In the winter of 1877-78 she went to Sacramento, the State capital, and secured the passage of an act opening the doors of the legal profession to women, and was the first to avail herself of the privileges of the new law, which she did in September, 1879, by being admitted to practice in the district court, and in December of the same year by admission to the supreme court of the State. During the year 1879 she applied for admission to the Hastings College of Law, which was refused. Acting on the theory that the law college was a part of the State University, to

which men and women were alike entitled to admission under the law, she sued out a writ of mandate against the regents to compel them to admit her. Against the ablest counsel in the State she won her case, both in the district and in the supreme court. When the decision came at last, she was unable to avail herself of its benefits, having passed the student period and already acquired a promising practice. In the winter of 1880 she was made clerk of the judiciary committee of the assembly, and upon the adjournment of the legislature began the practice of law in San Francisco. The political campaign of 1882 gave opportunity for the first real display of her oratorical powers. She made a dozen or more speeches, and at once took rank among the leading orators of the coast, speaking in the campaigns of 1884, 1886 and 1888. In 1885 and again in 1887, as a respite from a laborious practice, she lectured a short time in the Eastern States under the auspices of the Slayton Lyceum Bureau. Upon her return from the East, Governor Bartlett appointed her trustee of the State Normal School, which place she filled for the full term. She settled in San Diego in 1887 and started the "Daily Bee," an eight-page paper, which she edited and managed with success until its consolidation with the "Union." Upon the sale of her paper she resumed practice in San Diego, and continued there until the fall of 1890, when she returned to San Francisco, where she now commands a large and growing practice. Her sunny temper, genial disposition, broad views, liberal sentiments, never failing charity and ready repartee make her a brilliant conversationalist. As a lawyer she stands prominent among the lawyers of the country. Her success has brought her into general favor and won for her the complimentary title, "The Portia of the Pacific."