CHRISTINE LADD-FRANKLIN

1847 - 1930

Christine Ladd was born in Windsor, Connecticut on December 1, 1847. After schooling at Wesleyan Academy in Massachusetts for two years, she entered Vassar College in 1866. It was only after she left college that Ladd began her serious study of mathematics. She published solutions to mathematical problems in the *Educational Times* of London and the American journal *The Analyst*, and even studied mathematics at Harvard with W. E. Byerly and James Mills Peirce. With the support of the English mathematician J.J. Sylvester, Ladd was allowed to attend graduate courses in mathematics at Johns Hopkins University despite the fact that the university was not open to women.

At Johns Hopkins Ladd developed her interest in symbolic logic through the lectures of **Charles Sanders Peirce**, writing a dissertation on "The Algebra of Logic" and publishing several more articles in *The Analyst*. Her dissertation appeared in the volume *Studies in Logic by Members of the Johns Hopkins University*, edited by Charles S. Pierce, Little, Brown & Co., 1883.

Ladd-Franklin continued working on **symbolic logic** as well as the field of **physiological optics**. This latter area carried her into research in the optics of color vision, an area in which she worked for thirty-seven years. In 1929 Ladd-Franklin published her collected works on color vision entitled ***Colour and Colour Theories***.

The work of Dr. Christine Ladd-Franklin was genuinely interdisciplinary. Her theory of color vision, has certainly done excellent service by holding together the most important facts, and by relating psychology, physiology and photochemistry, along with an evolutionary conception of the development of the color sense. This theory arose out of her study of the theories of Helmholtz and Hering during her work in Germany in 1891-92.

Ladd-Franklin received many honors during her life. She was a lecturer on logic and psychology for five years at Johns Hopkins University (the only woman on the faculty) and for over fifteen years at Columbia University. She received an honorary LL.D. degree in 1887 from Vassar College and in 1926 was finally awarded a doctorate from Johns Hopkins, forty-four years after the completion of her dissertation.