

The following from the Boston Herald will give some inside history of the Denver Biennial in words of Eastern Women:

The story of the organization of the General Federation of Women's clubs in May, 1889, under the auspices of New York Sorosis, with but seventeen clubs as charter members, is a most interesting one. The first Biennial meeting, held in Chicago in 1892, showed by the increase in numbers and strength that the national association of clubs was meeting a practical want in club life, and had before it a future of increasing helpfulness. As yet it was a federation of individual clubs, and no one dreamed of the federations within the federations which have since developed with amazing rapidity and strength.

In Chicago at the memorable congress of representative women held in May, 1892, as a part of the world's fair, the general federation held a notable meeting, at which two states, Maine and Kansas, reported the formation of state organizations; Massachusetts had already taken the preliminary steps for a state organization which now numbers one hundred and twenty-four clubs. The state federation of Maine was a new organization, while that of Kansas was an outgrowth of its Social Science club, which since the year 1881 had been practically a federation representing eighty-two towns, and containing a larger membership than any, except, possibly, the New York organization. The third Biennial convention was held in Louisville, when one of the engrossing topics was that of the relations of the state and national federations, many club women feeling that the growth of the club movement would lead eventually to representation in the national federation by the state organization only. This argument cropped out again at the Biennial in Denver last month, for like Banquo's ghost, it will not down. It is, however, disposed of for the time being, because of the fact that several states have no federations.

The keynote of the Chicago Biennial was organization, and the work extended rapidly over the country. Two years later the Biennial convention was held in Philadelphia, when the federation, then five years old, reported three hundred and sixty-five individual clubs and several state federations. The movement for state federations then extended rapidly until there are now twenty-nine state federations in the national federation, beside five hundred individual clubs.

Of the state federations New York contains the largest number of clubs, Illinois and Iowa follow, and the Massachusetts state federation stands next, though its roll of individual club women outranks that of any state. A number of states have clubs which belong to the national federation alone, and are not affiliated with the state organization. Many women feel that upon the recognition of the individual club depends the true democracy of club life, and that to confine representation in the Biennial convention to the state federation only would be to establish an aristocracy of club women, a sort of royal house, especially where, as in some parts of the club world, rotation in office is hard to establish and to maintain.

A little comparison of the number of clubs in each state which belongs to the great general federation is just now especially interesting. Maine has ninety-eight clubs in her state federation, but only four clubs in the general federation; New Hampshire has forty-three clubs in her state federation, and two clubs in the national federation. The largest number of

clubs belonging to the general federation from any one state comes from Colorado, which two years ago had but seven, and now has seventy-one, the largest portion of these being very small clubs, organized after it was known that the Biennial convention would be held in Denver. The next largest number comes from Massachusetts, which has sixty-seven clubs in the national federation; Illinois stands next with sixty-five clubs; then comes Ohio with fifty-seven; New York and Pennsylvania with twenty-eight each; Michigan, twenty-two; Iowa, thirty-six; Missouri, sixteen; Indiana, sixteen; Rhode Island, Wisconsin, Maryland and Louisiana have each but three; South Dakota, North Dakota, Georgia, New Mexico and Tennessee have each only four clubs in the great federation, while North Carolina, Delaware, Wyoming, Nevada and Indian Territory have but one club each. It will thus be seen that the most powerful states in the federation under a pro rata representation would be, provided the clubs were of uniform size, Colorado, Massachusetts, Illinois and Ohio, but the fact is that Massachusetts has more members in one club than many states have in all, and with a per capita tax Massachusetts will pay one-seventh of the entire tax to the federation.

With these figures it seems unfair that the nominating committee should be composed of one member from each state, for in this case, and by the present methods, Wyoming, Delaware, the Carolinas and the Indian Territory, with their one small club each; Maryland, Louisiana and Wisconsin, with three apiece, and Georgia and the Dakotas, with only four, had exactly as much voice and influence upon the nominating committee and in the convention as did the states which have fostered and encouraged the club movement through an altruistic spirit and not from personal motives.

It is said that the future of the great general federation is to be a future of small clubs, owing to the passing of the per capita tax, as the small club is usually engaged in literary work, for which it needs but little money, while the large club, with its home or hospital to maintain, its kindergarten, its training schools and other philanthropic and altruistic work does not feel like paying so much money into the federation treasury, preferring to expend its funds for its own work.

Mrs. L. L. Blankenburg, president of the famous New York Century Woman's Guild of five hundred members, declares that her club will withdraw from the national federation, and affiliate only with the Pennsylvania state federation. The Woman's Charity club of Boston, with seven hundred members, has announced its intention of withdrawing, and many other clubs are talking of similar action. The fact is, the balance of power in the Denver Biennial was in the hands of new and untrained club women, who not only threw tradition to the winds, but had not, apparently, the gift of foresight.

It has been said, and no doubt with truth, that the true history of the Denver Biennial would never be told in print, and for this reason, reports of the delegates to their clubs are being awaited with all the more interest. But so many letters have come to the Herald from eastern club women who were unable to attend the Biennial, asking for more and fuller information as to "why things went as they did," that perhaps it may be well to quote a little from what the Massachusetts delegates say, for many of them are learning that they have not only their own sense of defeat to

bear, but also the accumulated woes of those they left at home.

Writes one prominent club president: "I am more disappointed than I can put into words over the results at Denver. Too sorely disappointed even to hope just now that the 'strengthening of the weak' may be thus accomplished."

Another club woman writes: "The very air of the convention seemed charged with conspiracy. Had we have known, could we have known in time, what we have paid so dearly for, we might have planned differently. But interest has by no means died out in this thing, and the ways of the Denver Biennial will not soon be forgotten."

A prominent club woman, a delegate from one of the largest New England clubs, says: "There is no ill-natured criticism, but there is much frank expression of opinion concerning some features of 'the great Biennial,' as it has come to be called. In the first place, there was much dissatisfaction with the program. While many of the sessions were as good as could be expected, others were far below the plane that should have been insisted upon. A much higher standard should be set for papers at the next Biennial.

"Now, about the election, which is the most discussed topic. Opinions as to the methods and the result are as varied as the groups discussing them. There is, however, among the Denver women a pretty general opinion that Mrs. Breed was not well treated, and much sympathy for her is expressed, though there is no dissatisfaction with Mrs. Lowe, the newly-elected president. Two things stand out rather prominently—a lack of courtesy to Mrs. Breed, a candidate for the position, and the determined opposition to Mrs. Breed of Mrs. Herrotin, the out-going president. This and that have been put together, and the outcome is the following story, which is pretty generally believed:

"Mrs. Breed was in the line of advancement at the time of the Louisville Biennial, and she should have stood an even chance for election if she had run against Mrs. Herrotin. She, however, worked in the interest of Mrs. Herrotin, and herself took the second place, with the tacit understanding of all concerned that at this year Mrs. Herrotin's influence would be used to help elect her to the presidency.

"It is a fact, however, that there was prejudice against Mrs. Breed before she arrived in Denver, and no one knows just how it arose. It was certainly from no action on her part. Women may not yet have got used to running with the political machine, but after this election of officers in the federation it cannot be said that they are ignorant of political wiles. A prominent woman of Denver, who has taken an active part in politics since Colorado became a suffrage state, said that the Massachusetts delegation was the only one that made a straight, stand-up fight for its candidate. The Massachusetts women presented their candidate and took only legitimate means to elect her."

Says Mrs. Dora M. Goodwin of the Haverhill Literary Union: "It has been said that Mrs. Breed's forces were not well organized or well counselled. To this there is but one reply to make—Massachusetts did not intend to enter a political campaign, or make use of political methods. She relied upon the fitness of her candidate. She rested her case upon merit. In the meetings of her delegation all idea of bargaining was sternly repudiated. Mrs. Breed herself has always carefully refrained from any action savoring of political methods. Massa-

chusetts held her candidate proudly before the convention; she voted solidly for her, and out of the humiliation of defeat, she plucked the rose of honor, to wear always, because she had not condescended to any trickery of words or means."

Mrs. Eliza R. Whiting of the Springfield Woman's club, says: "Alice Ives Breed would have made a good president. She had been doing work for the general federation from the time that it was organized, first on the state committee for Massachusetts, then as its chairman, then as national vice-president. She was in close sympathy with the first president, Mrs. Charlotte Emerson, during all the years she held office, and she has always been a zealous and active club woman. The national federation has always had her her most serious consideration, and the honor of the office of president would have been most fittingly bestowed upon her as a suitable acknowledgement of her work. Moreover, she knows the dangers ahead, and, perhaps more than any other woman, could have avoided the mistakes that the federation is in danger of making. She is democratic in her ideas. She sees the value of the federation for individual clubs, and if she had been made president there would have been no risk of the state federations assuming too large a place in the general federation. Mrs. Herrotin has been a popular president, but that she has not left the federation in as good shape as she found it is the opinion of some of the western women. I have not talked with any Massachusetts delegate since the close of the Biennial. The persistent declaration of some of the speakers at the meeting for election, that there should be no north, no south, no east, no west, is simply talk. It is impossible not to recognize facts, though that need not necessarily provoke sectional feeling. The characteristics of the different groups form a natural basis for distinction."

The Women's club of Columbus, Nebraska, is in a particularly flourishing condition, by which I mean of vigorous growth and vitality, taking strength from surrounding territory and returning it to the community a hundred fold—like the Biblical green bay tree. Two weeks ago THE COURIER published reports from the department of current events. This week reports from the domestic science and literary departments of the Columbus Woman's club.

Domestic Science—We are all familiar with the argument, which is a favorite one with all those who oppose the Woman's club movement: That the Woman's club takes the attention of the mother, wife or sister from the home and in consequence of this home duties are neglected.

We do not believe this to be true of any department of study which can be taken up in the Woman's club, least of all can it be truthfully urged in regard to the domestic science department, for in this department only topics relating to the home are discussed, such as home decoration, the nutritive properties of different foods, and the preparation of tempting viands.

We believe that all the departments of our club are helpful to the home life of its members. We believe that the study of music and art, literature and the current topics of the day, all have their place, but a few of the members of our club felt that this year they would also like to take up something that was distinctively domestic, consequently the domestic science department was organized in December.

Those instrumental in organizing this department thought that perhaps Sam Johnson was right when he said, "A

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