

# CLUBS.

Club vacations are drawing to a close and as the opening of the new year approaches how many different ideas for the betterment of the work and for ways and means of increasing interest in her own individual club are suggested to the club women.

The following letter to State President Stoutenborough from President Lowe, will be of much interest to club women. Mrs. Stoutenborough has made extraordinary efforts to get Mrs. Lowe and the managing board to come to Omaha, and her success is a tribute to her tact and perseverance.

Atlanta, Ga., Sept. 4.

My Dear Mrs. Stoutenborough:

By a change which I have been able to make in my affairs I will be able to come to Omaha for the state meeting the second week in October, but must be in Chicago by the 15th. The board will hold its meetings there on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of that week. If that date suits you we will be happy to come. I have made an effort to bring the board meeting there feeling that the work in your state would be helpful to us, and our presence in a body would interest the club women in the northwest. Hoping these dates will suit your own, I am

Very sincerely,  
REBECCA D. LOWE.

The Nebraska Federation of Women's clubs, the Trans-Mississippi Congress of Women and the National Household Economics association will convene at the First Congregational church in Omaha October 11, 12, 13, 14. The program will be one of unusual excellence. The speakers and their topics are as follows: Mrs. Pratt of Denver, vice-president of the General Federation, "The Unlimited Club;" Miss Julia Lathrop of Hull House, Chicago, and one of the commissioners of the state board of charities of Illinois, "Philanthropy and Charities;" Mrs. Lyndon Evans of Chicago, Clubs for Working Girls;" Mrs. A. E. Giddings of Anoka, Minn., "Rest Rooms for Farmer's Wives in Market Towns;" Mrs. Ivis Lord Moore of Santa Barbara, "Club Life in California;" Mrs. Lewellyn Douglas of Oklahoma, Pioneer Club Work in Oklahoma;" Miss Rockwell of Junction City, Kan., "Evolution in the American Home." Other speakers expected are Mrs. Henrotin, Mrs. Lowe of Georgia, president of General Federation of Women's clubs; Mrs. Sawyer of Lincoln, Mrs. Peattie of Chicago and Miss Cole. Admission to the meetings will be free. A reception will be given Thursday evening, October 13, in the club rooms to which all club women are invited.

Mrs. Mary Moody Pugh, vice president for Nebraska of the National Household Economic Association, would like a report from every woman's club in the state having a department of economics, or domestic science. The annual convention will meet October 13 and 14 in Omaha, and in order to compile her report individual reports are necessary. Please send them at once to 2569 St. Mary's Avenue, Omaha.

The true club woman is never satisfied with what is being done, but is always seeking to improve the qual-

ty and quantity of the work, and no one recognizes more clearly than she the demand for more careful, thorough work among women's clubs.

"Let him who is above reproach cast the first stone." Read some of the speeches of the men and women who will tell you so complacently that "it is a matter of great regret that women do such superficial work in their clubs." When we look back and see how great has been the advance since the inauguration of the club movement we do not fail to criticize, only to the extent that will arouse to greater effort and higher ambitions for better work; although a comparison of the year books of '97 and '98 with those of '93 and '94 show how far we have come. Still there is chance for great improvement.

Each club woman should carefully criticize herself and her club. Submit the following questions and write down your answers and see how they will look. Are we getting into ruts individually or as a club? Is it desirable to emancipate ourselves from the habit of reading long written papers before our club? Is it best for one member of the club to prepare one paper—when her turn comes alphabetically—and then feel that her work in that club is finished for that year? Is there as much educative value in a club whose members chose their own topics, each one entirely independent of the other, as though their work was a continuity, each one interested in some general subject and in turn presenting some phase of it? Would it not add greatly to the interest of the meeting and also ensure better preparation if each member was expected to talk from one to two minutes at every meeting on the subject of the discussion, no member being permitted to speak twice until all had spoken once. The leader showing her careful preparation by being able to discuss the subject in hand from every standpoint, rather than presenting it from one point of view in a labored paper.

There are many indications that several clubs in our midst are in ruts, so deep that they retard mental growth. One of the most seductive ruts and the hardest to get out of because it appeals to the lover of ease, and to those who wish to get their work for the year done all at one meeting, is the one afternoon apiece plan, where one member is responsible for the entertaining—or boring—of the whole club. You have all heard the self-gratulatory expression, "There, my work is done for the year!" Such a plan is sure death to a club. Some are more lingering in their decline but the inevitable result is the same.

Another evil result of such a system is, that the woman who sits meeting after meeting without hearing her own voice will be afraid of it when she is compelled to use it, and instead of gradually acquiring the habit of talking thoughtfully and with continuity upon any subject she will find herself compelled to read a paper when her turn comes to lead and in nine cases out of ten will have the mortification of knowing that inaudible sighs of thankfulness ascend to

heaven when she finishes her reading, and no matter how much she may have enthused over her subject, she has failed to carry her audience for lack of the eye to eye and face to face talk without which it is impossible to inspire the talker or arouse sympathy in the listener.

The one afternoon a year system tends to do away with the best and greatest good that comes to women through club life, viz.; the ability to talk what they have to say. It is not only the privilege but the duty of every club woman to cultivate extemporaneous speaking, but if she is not expected to express an opinion on subjects that are presented she may never make the mental effort to form one. But if the responsibility is placed upon her she will have an opinion and be able to express it and thus add her mite to the interest of each club meeting.

The president of one of our prominent clubs at the opening of the last meeting of the past year remarked, "This is the first meeting this year we have been able to begin on time for want of a quorum." There is no stronger comment on the lack of interest in a club than for its members to come straggling in, some five, some ten, some thirty minutes late. When such a condition prevails it behooves that club to cast about for the Jonah that is slowly but surely sinking it, if that Jonah is its plan of work, cast it out.

The real object of club life is the greatest good to the greatest number. Its practical results should be a broad, generous, charitable, benevolent spirit which is constantly giving illustration—in deeds, not thought—of its earnest desire to benefit others, of its anxiety to give from the fullness of its own life to make up for the deficiency in some other life, of its eagerness to make broader and brighter the pathway of life for all.

The club question in the past has been more or less an individual one, and very naturally so. The small club—the beginning of club life—was the natural outgrowth of its surroundings, the coming together of a few congenial spirits for mutual pleasure and improvement. The very surroundings of the small club make it exclusive and its work in the past has not gone beyond mutual benefits. It has not reached the great mass of women, the vast army of patient workers, either wage earners or home workers, who need so much a few rays of brightness and sunshine in their every day lives.

The woman's club is reaching out on many lines, largely philanthropic. Many of them are no longer asking "What benefits shall we receive," but have taken on their shibboleth. "In what way can we work best for the betterment of humanity" and thus bring back upon the individuals the great moral responsibilities which rest with each person.

"Go make thy garden as fair as thou canst,

Thou workest never alone;  
Perchance he whose plot is next to thine,

Will see it and mend his own."

Co-relation and co-operation are the watchwords for the brave and there is no reason why the small club should not be active and enthusiastic along altruistic lines as well as the woman's club and a positive stand on social questions by the culture clubs of our land would be an irresistible

power for good and surround our young people with a moral atmosphere of the highest order. The woman's club movement undoubtedly illustrates woman's true place in society. Mrs. Henrotin says: "The work of woman is above all educational construction and co-ordinating and she is always successful in following these lines, and especially should her life be one of applied Christianity, in the work, in the home, in the school and in the world."

The small club of the future from the very atmosphere of clubdom, must grow broader and more altruistic. Its position on all social questions should be broad and positive. It is best to emphasize the good rather than dwell upon the evil.

"For freedom is more large than crime,  
And error is more small than time."

The following programs were prepared by a committee appointed by the General Federation and are simply offered as suggestions for club work. The committee do not desire that these plans be blindly accepted and followed, as it is well aware that some of the best club development comes from the careful elaboration of the year books within the club itself, but some have asked for assistance, which excuses the offering. These programs were sent the state corresponding secretary, Mrs. A. C. Ricketts, who has very kindly handed them to The Courier. Others will be published later.

## TOPICS IN AMERICAN HISTORY.

The Early Indian Wars.

Characteristics of the Puritans.

Peter Stuyvesant and the Dutch Settlements.

Quakerism in New England.

The History of Witchcraft.

History of the State.

William Penn.

Roger Williams and Rhode Island.

The Revolution.

American Heroes.

The Civil War.

Constitutional History of America.

Benedict Arnold—A Character Study.

Abraham Lincoln—A Character Study.

## OUR OWN WORLD

Early Settlement of the State—Character of its founders, and impress they made upon the commonwealth. What is the form of its political government? Compare the earliest forms of state government in this country. Discuss the witenagemote and town-meeting.

Geographical and Political History of State—Also of the town, borough, or city, and its relations to the country. Laws of the state effecting women, as wives, mothers and owners of property.

Present Local Government—How constituted. Appointment of officers and functions of the same. General conduct of elections. Is vote-selling prevalent? What share, if any, have women in the government?

Taxation—Methods of raising revenues, and appropriations of the same.

Local Charities—How administered. Cost. Are the methods employed modern? How do they compare with those of neighboring towns or cities? Discuss poor-houses, poor-farms, etc. Could better plans be devised for care of paupers? How does the town deal with the tramp? Wood yards—laundries. Increase of pauperism compared with increase of population.

Criminal Classes—What are they? How deal with them? Any local reason for peculiar classes of crimes. What is the increase of crime compared to population? What does the jail