

CLUBS.

[LOUISA L. RICKETTS.]

THE COURIER, Official Organ of the Nebraska State Federation of Women's Clubs.

CALENDAR OF NEBRASKA CLUBS.

November	
18.	Pansy c. Longfellow and Whittier, Tecumseh
18.	Woman's c., The Restoration 1690-1699, Syracuse
18.	History and Art c., Charles the Great, Conquest of Saxony, Seward
18.	Flu. de Siclee c., The Connection between Theological Writing and Literature, Seward
20.	Woman's c., Art department, Lincoln
20.	Sorosis, Cur. topics, Coriolanus, Act III, Stanton
20.	Woman's c., Parliamentary Practice, Omaha
21.	Woman's c., Pol. and Social science, Omaha
21.	Woman's c., Current Topics, Omaha
21.	Woman's c., German History, Omaha
21.	Woman's c., Ethics and Philosophy, Omaha
21.	Woman's c., French Conversation, Omaha
22.	Woman's c., Oratory, Omaha
23.	Woman's c., Art, Omaha
21.	Century c., Holland. Struggle for Independence, Lincoln
21.	Hist. & Art c., The Insurrection in Ireland, Albion
21.	Sorosis, Child study, Lincoln
23.	Woman's c., History department, Lincoln
24.	The Hall in the Grove, Ravenna, Florence, Genoa, Lincoln
24.	Self Culture c., How to Prepare the Thanksgiving Dinner, St. Paul
25.	XIX Century c., Painting in the Netherlands, History of Politics, Seward
25.	Hist. & Art c., An afternoon with Kipling, Seward
25.	Woman's c., Child study department, Lincoln
26.	Renaissance c., War in the Transvaal, Lincoln

OFFICERS OF N. F. W. C., 1899 & 1900.

Pres., Mrs. Anna L. Apperson, Tecumseh.  
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Editor Courier—In reading Mrs. Peattie's article, "Women and the Home" and Olive Schreiner's remarks on the woman question in The Courier of the 11th, I felt for a few moments as though something was the matter with the cosmos. Pessimism is as little consonant with the facts of existence as optimism. But he who looks through the spectacles of common sense at practical life is more apt to form correct conclusions. Every question has two sides and some are even octagonal. Both of these women seem to think that the old command to increase and multiply the earth that was given to a drowned world, is still in compelling force, although the earth has been dry for several years. From their point of vision this command is the first law of being. Mrs. Peattie says the American women have grown very willful, very extravagant, intensely aspiring individually, and very vain, they are supercilious to men and refuse to bear children. As an American woman I object to being so maligned. That class of women is not more representative of American womanhood, than the foam on a rushing river is of the volume of water underneath. I will admit that it catches the eye of the onlooker but there is very little water in the froth. The impression she leaves is that women have nothing to do, and will not bear children, and consequently are discontented, and men are angry. There are just as many men opposed to large families as women, and it is not alone those men who shrink from the drudgery of supporting a family, but thoughtful men who know what the struggle for existence means, and are too conscientious to launch into the maelstrom of life human beings that have to contend with the output of Five Points for the means of satisfying hunger. As regards American women having nothing to do. They are the most overworked women in the world. Statistics are abominable, but they have to

be given like a dose of medicine, when the occasion requires. And statistics say that only eighteen per cent of all the families of America employ domestic help, leaving eighty-two per cent without even one servant. Consequently there are eighty-two per cent of American women who have enough to do to keep them happy and contented if house work is all they need. Not six per cent of all the women in America spend as much money as fifty dollars per year on their clothes, and that leaves ninety-four per cent of American women who escape the stigma of extravagance. Out of twelve million of American families the income of four million of these families is less than \$400 each per year. Many board because they cannot afford to keep house, and do not raise a family, not because "the wife prefers a parrot or spaniel" to a babe, but because every additional mouth to fill means a division of the food that is already scant enough. Remember a poor American woman is just as much an American woman as a rich American woman, and with our free school system is often just as refined, cultured, and educated. The income of nearly eighty per cent of the whole number of American families is less than \$1,000 each per year, and those housewives certainly have enough to do to make income and expenses meet. Mrs. Peattie says, "we need not fear to assert and insist that were American women to have more children their discontent would disappear," she applies children as a counter irritant for discontented women, without one thought of children crowded into a world, that is already threatened with over production for with our improved sanitarium and scientific pathology the birthrate exceeds the death rate three million a year, and if those American women of whom Mrs. Peattie says man does not quite see their raison d'être, have nothing else to recommend them they should be commended for not multiplying and increasing an already over stocked human market.

The Primitive Savage who fought like any other animal for existence, was true to the primordial law of his being, and multiplied without thought, and lived and died for thousands of generations, along side the mammoth, the lion and the hyena. His life was spent in the same way and he followed his natural instincts the same as his less erect but more hairy compatriots. In the swarms of colonies thrown out by Phoenicia and by old Greece, in the flood of Gauls and Teutons which burst over the frontiers of the old civilization of Europe, in the swaying too and fro of the vast Mongolian hordes of later times. The population problem came to the front. Nature has no regard, whatever, for the needs of society, anyone who is acquainted with the state of the population of all great industrial centers, is aware that amid a large and increasing body of that population misery reigns supreme and so long as the natural man is true to the primordial law of his being and increases and multiplies without restraint so long will the struggle for existence in times of peace be as sharp and as merciless as that of war.

Should the cultivated women bear the children, Mrs. Peattie suggests and not leave the task to the Russian, Jew, and poor Italian women the country would be the better for it. Such a state of affairs would not help the Russian Jew or poor Italian women in the least, nor the country either. The Russian Jew and poor Italian women would still produce their quota and be as true to nature as are the rabbits of Australia. It would only make the struggle for existence all the fiercer, and the weakest would go to the wall and in nine cases out of ten it would be the children of cultured parents, who, from their very environment are unable to cope with a

class hounded by savage necessity." The chief cause of the struggle for existence today is over population. To increase and multiply is the only traditional command that has been spontaneously obeyed by the great majority of the human race.

But in civilized society the inevitable result of such obedience is the re-establishment in all its rigor of that struggle for existence—the war of each against all—the mitigation or abolition of which is the chief end of intelligent social organization. Man must use his reason and intellect. And the adjustment of the reproduction of his species to existing conditions of society, is an excellent way to display his superiority to the brute creation.

Mrs. Peattie's fear that woman will cultivate her self until she is beyond her husband, and will be lonesome in the rarefied atmosphere of intelligence, is nonsense. History records the evils of over-production, even to the extent of some countries practicing infanticide to control it, but never in the annals of time has the human race suffered from a surplus of intelligence.

The American woman is a busy woman and a happy woman, and her home is as nearly a heaven as any spot on earth. She is loved and petted and she thrives in that congenial atmosphere, and loves and pets everything in sight. And those women who are so fortunately situated in life as to have means and time at their disposal are many of them doing a noble work for their less fortunate sisters, and thousands of those who only know the sombre side of life are helped and comforted, cheered and strengthened by those very women that some men cannot see the *raison d'être* for their existence because they are not engaged in swelling the census returns.

Mrs. D. C. McKILLIP.

Seward, Neb., Nov. 17, 1899.

The Plattsmouth Woman's Club met Wednesday, November 3. The current topic and American history department furnished the program.

The leader of the current topics department, Mrs. Waugh, announced the subject for discussion "Side Lights of the Transvaal War." A number of interesting facts as to the cause that had led up to this war were given, and as all members were given an opportunity to take part in the discussion, this portion of the evening's program was extremely interesting; showing conclusively that women are taking interest in something besides the "fashion column" and the daily papers are being read and the topics of the day, political and practical, are receiving careful attention.

Lieutenant Rawls occupied the latter portion of the evening, giving an excellent lecture on "Colonial Wars." Mr. Rawls is an entertaining speaker and the hour devoted to his lecture was none too long, many wishing that it might be prolonged another hour.

Yesterday evening was given to the subject of parliamentary law and American literature, both subjects being of especial interest to the club.

The child study department of the woman's club met Saturday at 3 o'clock p. m.

The first half hour was occupied by Mrs. F. M. Hall in a very interesting talk on the importance in art in the development of character in children. Mrs. Hall exhibited copies of great pictures and dwelt particularly upon those she thought would be useful in moral and religious development of children.

Mrs. Foquet read an instructive paper on "Growth and Use of Muscles," which paper was followed by a general discussion of that subject.

Mrs. H. F. Doane, of Crete, treasurer of the state federation read the follow-

ing paper on "What Shall We Do with Music?" at the state convention held at York:

A woman with a mission is almost as bad as a woman with a grievance, but I hope that those who have come here today who perhaps have not much interest in missions, either domestic or foreign, will have patience to listen to a few remarks on music.

The criticism is often made that club women take themselves too seriously, and the criticism may be true, but to my mind we do not take the development of the artistic side of our natures seriously enough. One does need to be able to execute finely in order to be musically cultured, though that is the common idea concerning the study of music. In order to enjoy good music one should have a knowledge of what good music is. Think what a field is open to one who "wants to know." We talk about sonatas, symphonies, symphonic poems, oratorios, operas, chamber music, etc., and do half of us know what they are, or anything about their construction? Music is not an accomplishment only—it is a serious critical study and it will never have its proper place in our club work until we recognize its importance. A lady said to me not long ago, "What is the use of teaching our children music? No one listens to amateurs now-a-days." That may be true, but it is something for our children to be able to listen intelligently even if, as performers, they are not listened to—and though they may be amateurs in execution, they may be professionals in their knowledge and comprehension. And the effect of training in accuracy, time and rhythm is incalculable. Sidney Lanier, the poet-musician, in speaking of his own ideals, says: "I have so many fair dreams and hopes about music in these days. It is a gospel whereof the people are in great need. As Christ gathered up the Ten Commandments and re-distilled them into the clean liquid of that wondrous eleventh—Love God utterly and thy neighbor as thyself—so I think the time will come when music, rightly developed to its now-little-foreseen grandeur, will be accepted as a revelation of all gospels in one."

For a practical application of these ideas, cannot we have more music in our regular club programs? I received a short time ago a book of programs from the Minden Woman's Club and was delighted to find music in nearly every one. If this does not meet with gen-

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